THE WANDERER'S NIGHT SONG.*

Thou who the child of Heaven art,
Who transports and sorrows stillest,
Who the doubly wretched heart
Doubly with thy comfort fillest.
Ah, when will my yearning cease!
What avails or joy or grief?
Blessed peace,
Bring, ah bring my heart relief!

* This piece was written February 12th, 1776, as a note to Frau von Stein.—See Schöll's *Goethe's Briefe an Frau von Stein.*

TO THE MOON.*

Over vale and grove thy glance
Still and hazy gleams,
Thou'lt dissolve my soul perchance
In thy peaceful beams.

Soothingly thy glances lie
O'er the meadow spread,
As the light of friendship's eye
O'er my fate is shed.

Echoes of the past I hear
Joyous days and sad,

* A young lady, named Von Lassberg, believing herself deserted by her lover, drowned herself in the Ilm, in 1778. The incident gave rise to this poem. As originally written and sent to Frau von Stein, in January, 1778, it was much shorter and differed considerably in expression.

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THE

MINOR POETRY

OF

GOETHE.

A SELECTION FROM HIS

SONGS, BALLADS, AND OTHER LESSER POEMS.

TRANSLATED

BY

WILLIAM GRASETT THOMAS.

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INTRODUCTION.

Translations of the lyrical poems of Goethe have often been laid before the English and American admirers of German poetry; but hitherto only in connection with those of other German poets.* The present selection, which is devoted to him alone, is, it is believed, also numerically greater than any that has preceded it.

It would not, however, have been out of place, even if it had only traversed the same ground that its predecessors had passed over. To those, indeed, who are unacquainted with the original, two versions are not better

* Just as this work is about to go to press, the first copies of a recently issued volume of Goethe's poems, by Aytoun and Martin, have reached this country.

than one; but translations are rarely read, except by those who have some knowledge of the work in its primary form; and to these there is value in every new attempt to express, in their own familiar language, the beauty of sentiment which they have admired in another, however moderate the success of the attempt may be.

When we read the lighter poetry of a strange language, we commonly feel a desire to attempt to render into our own those pieces, which are especially recommended to us by some new and beautiful thought, or by the happy expression of feelings that have lain long unuttered in our own minds:

> "Thoughts that we have cherished long
> Intermingled with the song."

Many of the present translations originated in a similar feeling, before any intention had been entertained of venturing upon the hazardous task of preparing an English version of the great German Bard for publication.

The songs and other poems, which relate to Frederica Brion and to Lili, were among those to which attention was naturally directed, by the perusal of the poet's auto-

biography. Mr. Lewes's Life of Goethe had not yet been made public, and the information which could be obtained in the English language concerning the first of these persons was limited to the account given by Goethe himself. To gratify a perhaps foolish curiosity, and for the purpose of getting a thorough understanding of the poems addressed to her, the publications which relate to Frederica were obtained from Germany. Mr. Lewes's full account of her and others, in whom Goethe became interested, supplies all that could be desired to be known regarding them; but, for the sake of illustration, a short notice of these persons will be given at the end of this introduction.

Of the poet, and of the character of his poetry, the translator will venture to say but little. Criticism is so high an art, and in this instance the subject of it so exalted, that the ground would be dangerous. Nor would it be worth while merely to repeat what has been said by others. It will only be remarked, that the poems in this collection belong, for the most part, to his earlier years; his later lyrical writings being deficient in the warmth and simplicity which distinguish the productions of his

youth. For in this kind of poetry, experience and the increase of knowledge are in vain,

Pues amor para ser sabio
No va á la universidad.
* * * * *
Y asi en su ciencia verás
Que los que la cursan mas,
Son los que la saben menos.

Concerning the execution of the work, it may be observed, that the translator has labored to be faithful, although, no doubt, it will be found that here and there his unskilfulness has caused him to sacrifice reason to rhyme.

The form of verse, as well as the text, has been adhered to, with but few exceptions. In those poems in which Goethe made use of the classical metres, the form has not been followed, because it is usually considered that those measures cannot be produced successfully in English. And, indeed, Goethe himself seems to have doubted, in this respect, the capabilities of his own language, remarking, in a letter from Rome, of January 10,

1787, "We meet, in our language, with but few syllables that are decidedly either long or short."

A very large proportion of German poems (the exceptions are scarcely one in a hundred) are double-rhymed. This has not been uniformly followed, because the double or female rhyming of German versification is not of choice, but of necessity. It is compelled by the form of the language. The inflection of verbs and nouns causes the final syllables to be short, while the infinitive of every verb in the language ends with the unaccented syllable *en*, or with contractions of it, leaving but few words with which to make common or male rhymes. Moreover, double rhyming, which is occasionally an ornament, when used indiscriminately becomes a defect. And, in addition to this, double rhymes, which are so abundant in German, are, for opposite reasons, as scarce in English; and, in attempting to employ them, the temptation to unfaithfulness is greatly increased.

To the translations in this volume, explanatory notes have been appended, wherever interesting information existed, or could be obtained; and in every instance the information, it is believed, will be found trustworthy.

Some of the poems would have required so much space for intelligible annotation, that the reader must be referred elsewhere for explanation. Such are the songs of Mignon and the Harper, and the other poems from Wilhelm Meister, which cannot well be understood without reading the novel itself. It will, probably, add to the interest in Mignon and her songs, to mention that the "original" of this character was Antoinette Gerold, a relative of Schlosser, who married Goethe's sister. This was not known until the publication of the correspondence between Goethe and F. H. Jacobi, where (page 9) the editor states that she was passionately attached to Goethe from her childhood. Goethe's readers out of Germany are generally unacquainted with this fact, and, as far as the translator is informed, it has never been mentioned in any English publication relating to him.

The friendship between Goethe and Frau von Stein extended through so long a period of his life, that it would be impracticable to give shortly any account of it or her. The reader must turn to Lewes's Life, and, if very curious, to Schöll's correspondence. To the selec-

tion from the poems addressed to her, short notes are added, which will satisfy most readers.

FREDERICA.

At the urgent request of his father, Goethe proceeded to Strassburg in the year 1770, for the purpose of continuing his studies in the law, being then in his twenty-first year.

It was during his residence in that city, that the first of those attachments arose, which exercised so great an influence on his lyrical poetry.

In company with one or two friends, he had visited the various points of interest around Strassburg, and had been admitted, through the instrumentality of one of them, to the intimacy of many neighboring families. Among these was that of a country clergyman, living some six leagues from Strassburg, at Sesenheim.

He there met with two ladies, the youngest of whom made on him a deep impression. The name of this young person was Frederica Brion, then, at the time of her first acquaintance with the poet, in the autumn of 1770, only sixteen years of age.

It would be useless to attempt a description of Frederica to those who have read Goethe's own account of her, as is probably the case with all who take an interest in his poetry. That she was as beautiful and artless as he describes her, we may readily believe, or she would not have so powerfully moved so remarkable a man.

But a few days had elapsed, before they had acknowledged the highest regard for each other.

The relation had lasted about one year, when, without any reason that can be discovered in his narrative, except that its continuance would interfere with his prospects in life, he heartlessly separated himself from her. He paid her a final visit at the close of 1771; and, on reaching Frankfort, he wrote her a farewell letter, her answer to which awakened in him the keenest remorse, but did not induce him to give her any assurance of faithfulness.

Still, the separation could not take place without some feelings of pain at the time; and, after the lapse of many years, he still thought and spoke of her, as "one who had loved him more beautifully than he had deserved, and more than others, on whom he had lavished love and faithfulness." And even at the close of his long life, the

memory of his old love came back to him and subdued him.*

We are told of stars so remote, that if one of them should become extinct, its light would still for ages traverse the wastes of nature and irradiate the world: and this beautiful passion of his early youth, extinguished in the selfish necessities of life, shed, like a lost star, its holy light upon his heart even to the end of his days.

He saw her but once again, in 1779, when on his second journey into Switzerland. "I found her," he says, "but little changed, and as friendly, affectionate, and confiding as ever."

The parents of Frederica were poor, and, after their death, her younger sister Sophia and herself kept for their support a children's school in Steinthal. She after-

* The secretary is now living, to whom this part of the Autobiography was dictated, and he remembers vividly how much affected Goethe seemed to be, as these scenes revisited his memory. He dictated walking up and down the room, with his hands behind him; but at this episode he often stopped in his walk, and paused in the dictation; then, after a long silence, followed by a deep sigh, he continued the narrative in a lower tone.—*Lewes's Life of Goethe.*

January 11, 1753, and, therefore, at this time in her twentieth year, was destined to exercise not a little influence on Goethe, and on his literary reputation.

It was on the evening of the 9th June, 1772, that Goethe and herself met for the first time at a ball in the neighborhood of Wetzlar. The impression made on him led him to seek her acquaintance, and, accordingly, he visited her the next day. At this first meeting with Lotte, he was not aware that she was "no longer free." But this would have made no difference, as he had resolved to check any tendencies to new passion, and, forgetful of Frederica, considered himself as "completely free from all ties."

The daily intercourse with a person of unusual beauty, and attractive in other respects, did not fail to work its natural effect. While Goethe lived happily in this agreeable, though perilous, relation of friendship with such a person, he did not observe that a new and powerful passion was taking possession of him, and threatening the most serious consequences to his own peace, and to his duty to his friend Kestner. The latter and the poet had become the firmest friends; and Kestner saw the grow-

ing intimacy between Lotte and his friend, with entire freedom from jealousy. "To Goethe, the poet, whose very calling was the Beautiful, it was natural here once again to love, and both young men, while at every instant they overcame the greatest dangers that friendship can encounter, bore witness to one another of the possession of those noble qualities, which alone made it possible to act worthily in so difficult a situation."—(*Goethe und Werther.*)

And Kestner was justified in his confidence; for, although a most ardent attachment to Lotte arose in the breast of his friend, yet when Goethe found that it was becoming more than he could control, he quitted abruptly the scene of his happiness and distress. After a sojourn at Wetzlar of four months, he left it and his friends, bidding them farewell in two short and passionate notes.

He saw Lotte once again in November of the same year, for a day; but after that he met her no more for nearly forty years, when he saw her by accident, then the mother of a numerous family. She died in 1828, at the age of seventy-five.

The correspondence between Goethe and herself and her husband, was published a few years since, under the title of *Goethe und Werther*, by one of her sons.

Among the young men whom Goethe met at Wetzlar, was Charles William Jerusalem, also an attaché of an embassy. Shortly after Goethe's departure from Wetzlar, Jerusalem shot himself, because of a misplaced attachment. Jerusalem's death, in connection with his own relation to Lotte, furnished Goethe with the materials for the *Sorrows of Werther*. This book deeply offended Lotte and her husband, not that it brought them to public notice; but because Goethe therein represented his own position towards Lotte very differently from what it really had been, and because Kestner's portrait was painted in no flattering colours. He protested that he had offended without intention, and confessing his fault, was forgiven.

The poems addressed to Lotte are at most but three, and of these one is in dispute, *i. e.* that entitled *An Lottchen*. The reasons assigned by Düntzer, in his paper *Goethe's Lotte*, &c., for rejecting it, seem satisfactory, and

it has therefore been omitted here. Düntzer rejects also the verses styled *Das garstige Gesicht;* but the publication of the Kestner letters has shown that he is wrong. The poem entitled *To Lina*, which will be found in another place, is supposed by Viehoff to have been also addressed to Lotte; but this is uncertain.

LILI.

His passion for Charlotte rapidly subsided; and Maximiliane Laroche succeeded to the unstable affections of the poet. This flame, too, died out in its turn, as did also that for his Clavigo friend, Fraülein Münch, a marriage with whom was projected by his parents, and seemed likely to come to pass; but his mother frightened him, by producing from her stores, with other preparations for the event, a collection of old cradles.

His growing reputation made him an object of curiosity to the society of Frankfort; and brought him many invitations, which, for the most part, he neglected.

A friend, however, persuaded him, one evening, to go with him to a concert at the house of a merchant of the

name of Schönemann. He found there a numerous company, whom the only daughter of the family delighted by her ready and graceful performance on the piano. Goethe was attracted by her beauty and grace, and delighted with her conversation. He availed himself of an invitation to repeat his visit; and, in a short time, the two stood upon the most affectionate footing.

Lili, or Belinda, or Elizabeth Schönemann was born on the 23d June, 1758, and was at this time sixteen years of age; and yet she confessed to her new admirer, that she had already been engaged in other similar tendernesses. Goethe describes the influence which she exercised over him as great; and says, indeed, that she was the *only one* whom he had ever truly loved; a statement from which every reader of his history will dissent.

As long as the consent of their parents was not to be had, Goethe was anxious to be married; but when, at length, it was obtained by the intercession of a friend, his ardor cooled, and he soon left her to go on a journey with the express object of trying whether he could not renounce her.

He returned, however, to Frankfort with his love for

her redoubled; but found that during his absence an attempt had been made to wean her from her attachment, by representing to her, that his absence was an evidence of want of affection on his part. Although Lili was willing to adhere to her engagement, these representations were not without their effect; and at last they parted. He went on his life-long visit to Weimar; and she, three years later, gave her hand to Von Türkheim, a banker of Strassburg.

We hear little of her after her marriage. Goethe visited her, and dined with her at Strassburg in September, 1779. And, after the battle of Jena, a young officer in the French cavalry, Lili's son, announced first to him the impending sack of Weimar; and that his house would be protected.

Lili died in 1817.

There seems to be no question of the correctness of the reference to Lili of the poems here given. Goethe himself says in the *Annalen*, that many addressed to her have been lost. The poem entitled *Sadness* was not written in reference to her; but as Goethe in his Auto-

biography represents it as expressing certain emotions growing out of his relation to her, it has been added to the *Lili* poems. It was written as a part of the Singspiel *Erwin und Elmire.*

THE

MINOR POETRY

OF

GOETHE.

A SIMILE.

But lately to my home I brought
Some meadow flowers in silent thought;
When, heated by my hand, I found
Their heads had bent towards the ground.
In water they are quickly laid,
When lo! a marvel is displayed.
The quickened heads once more resume,
And leaves and stems, their primal bloom,
And healthful all, as when at birth
They sprung forth from their mother Earth.

So felt I when, in foreign tongue,
I wondering heard my ballads sung.

DEPRECATION.

A PASSIONATE stammering has to us,
When written down, what strange effect!
I now shall go from house to house,
And all the scattered leaves collect.

Whate'er did once a lengthened way
In life from one another stand,
Collected 'neath one roof to-day,
Comes to the gentle reader's hand.

Be not of its defects ashamed,
The little book read quickly through;
The world's of contradiction framed,
Let it be inconsistent too.

TO THE FRIENDLY.

Bards love not their peace to hold,
Rather to the world unfold.
Some will praise and some reprove!
None confession like *in prosa;*
But we oft confide *sub rosa*
In the Muses' silent grove.

How I erred, and how I strived,
What I suffered, how I lived,
Flow'rets in a bunch are here;
And the old as well as youthful,
And the faulty as the truthful,
Always well in verse appear.

FREDERICA.

WELCOME AND FAREWELL.*

My heart beat high! My horse came forth!
At once upon the steed I sprung;
To sleep had Evening rocked the Earth,
And Night upon the mountains hung:
The oak in gloomy vestment reared
His towering form, a giant there,
Where from the thicket Darkness peered
With hundred eyes on hastening Fear.

The moon, upon a bank of cloud,
Looked sadly through the misty air;
The winds were roaring round me loud,
And beat their wings about my ear.

* The ride by night, and the visit to Frederica described in this poem, are mentioned in the eleventh book of the Autobiography.

The night a thousand monsters showed,
But joyous was my soul and bold;
And in my heart what ardor glowed!
And through my veins what fire rolled!

I saw thee, and a gentle joy
Flowed from thy kindly eye on me;
My heart rejoiced that thou wert nigh,
And every breath I drew for thee.
A vernal morning's roseate hue
Thy charming face from love had caught,
That tenderness thou show'dst me too,
I hoped it, I deserved it not!

But with, alas! the dawning sky
The farewell weighs upon my heart:
What raptures in thy kisses lie!
How fall thy tears, that we must part!
I went—thou stood'st and watchedst me
With downcast look and tearful eye.
What joy to be beloved by thee!
And thee to love, oh God, what joy!

VERSES SENT WITH A PAINTED RIBBON.*

Fairy leaves and fairy posies,
Scatter here with gentle hand;
Little Cupids 'mid the roses,
Sporting on a brilliant band.

Of it, Zephyr, be thou bearer,
Bind it on my darling's dress;
Lead her then before the mirror
In her youthful sprightliness.

* The occasion of these verses is thus alluded to by Goethe in the Autobiography: "Painted ribbons had, at that time, just come into fashion. I painted a few pieces for her, and sent them to her with a little poem, in advance of my own arrival, as I was obliged this time to be absent from her longer than I had thought."

She sees herself with roses laden,
Like a tender rose is she.
But one look, beloved maiden!
Full reward for me 'twill be.

Feel thou what this heart exciteth,
Frankly reach thy hand to me;
For the bond that us uniteth,
Shall no fragile rose-wreath be!

TO THE CHOSEN.

Hand in hand, and lip to lip!
Dearest maiden, faithful be!
Fare thee well! thy lover's ship
Yet may brave the stormy sea;
If again he greet the shore,
If the tempest's rage he miss,
Vengeance on him Heaven pour,
If thou sharest not his bliss.

Boldly staked is almost won,
Half is gained my labor's fight;
Starlight is to me a sun,
For the faint of heart 'tis night.

Were I idle by thy side,
Care would heavy lie on me;
But I, in the world so wide,
Brave will work, and all for thee.

Almost in the vale I seem,
Where I'll wander by thy side;
Gently downward glide the stream
We will watch at eventide.
Ah! those poplars on the mead,
And that beechen grove I see!
And among the branches hid,
There a cottage too shall be.

ON A TREE IN THE WOOD NEAR SESENHEIM.*

Let t'wards the heavens rear
The tree, Earth's pride, its form.
The holy wood, oh spare,
Ye wind, and rain, and storm!
And must a name be marred,
Of those above take care!
And perish let the bard,
This rhyme who maketh here.

* This poem, which has only comparatively recently been included in the works of Goethe, was obtained for Professor Näke, by a former pupil of his, from Sophia Brion, Frederica's younger sister. In the Autobiography, mention is made of a little wood, among the trees of which were some benches, and, hanging on one of the trees, a board, inscribed *Friederikensruhe.* Sophia, who knew of the place only by the name of *The Nightingale Grove,* said, that on a board were written the names of several friends of the Sesenheim family, and that under these names Goethe wrote his, with the verses here given.

TO FREDERICA.*

Wake Frederica mine!
Drive night away,
Which one bright glance of thine
Turns into day!
The songsters twittering all
Their love-songs make,
And my sweet sisters call
From sleep to wake.

Is sacred not my peace,
Nor yet thy vow?

* This poem and the two which follow it, were obtained from Sophia Brion, and first given to the world in 1838, by A. Stöber. They have not been included in Goethe's works, but are found at the end of Stöber's little volume, *Der Dichter Lenz*, &c., and among the other Sesenheim poems (with some spurious) in Pfeiffer's *Sesenheimer Liederbuch.*

Awake! Thy slumbering cease!
Still sleepest thou?
Hark! Philomel her plaint
Sings not to-day,
Because on thee constraint
Ill slumbers lay.

The modest morning bloom,
With beauty fraught,
Though blushing through thy room,
Awakes thee not.
Thy sister's loving breast
Thou sleepest on,
And deeper is thy rest
The more 'tis dawn.

I saw thee sleep, bright maid!
With sweet delight
A tear mine eyelids shed,
That dims my sight.
Who coldly this can see?
Or who not glow,

E'en though of ice he be
From head to toe?*

Perhaps by thee in dreams
Mine image glides,
That half in sleep and dreams
The Muses chides.
See pale and flushed his face!
Though sleep forsake
The dreamer's fond embrace,
He does not wake.

The nightingale as thou
To slight didst dare,
So thou my rhyme must now
For penance hear.
The heavy yoke of rhyme
Upon me lay,
My fairest Muse, the time
Thou sleep'st away.

* As this expression occurs elsewhere in Goethe, no doubt it is admitted, in German, into romantic poetry. The last three stanzas are rather obscure.

TO FREDERICA.*

Ah! art thou gone? From out what golden play
Of dreams I waken to my pain!
Entreaty kept thee not, thou wouldst not stay,
Thou fledst away from me again.

* Viehoff thinks, that of all the poems in the *Sesenheimer Liederbuch*, this one is of most doubtful genuineness, because it sounds like the forced utterance of a commonplace versifier, and because it expresses a state of things between Goethe and Frederica quite at variance with that described by Goethe himself. But as he considers its genuineness unquestionable, he suggests that Goethe might have been exhibiting to her some of the *Lover's Caprices*, which separated him from Annette, or that she might have discovered his wavering, and have determined to take the first step towards the dissolution of their relation. May not the coldness have been "a bashful art" of Frederica's, to precipitate a more decided action than he had yet taken?

A second time away I saw thee go,
With tears was filled thy godlike eye
For friends—but unobserved, my silent woe
Was passed in cold indifference by.

Why didst thou turn thy face away unkind,
Nor parting one sweet look didst spare?
Oh wherefore didst thou nothing leave behind
To him, but death, and dark despair?

In vain he would his cheerful heart recall!
The sun looks dim, and bare the ground,
The trees bloom black, the leaves are faded all,
And withered everything around.

Where'er he roved with thee, he wanders there,
In winding vale, by brook, in glade,
And finds thee not, and full of his despair
And love, his tears for thee are shed.

Then in the town; but that his heart dismays,
He finds thee not, Perfection, there!

Let after yonder dolls another gaze,
The silly things he cannot bear.*

Oh let, oh let him not in vain implore,
And write to him, thou lov'st him still!
Or else, alas! ne'er let him see thee more,
If thou this hope wilt not fulfil.

What! never see thee more! Oh dreadful thought,
Pour all thine anguish out on me!
I feel, I feel it all, the cruel lot—
I die, oh cruel maid, for thee!

* Pfeiffer supposes that these expressions ("yonder dolls" and "silly things") refer to Frederica's city friends and relatives, whom she had been visiting; but Goethe would hardly have applied terms of contempt to her friends in addressing her. He probably speaks of the girls of Strassburg, with their city dresses and artificial manners.

A GLOOMY MORN.

A GLOOMY morning shrouds
  My meadow from my eyes;
Hid in the misty clouds,
  The world about me lies.
Oh Frederica mine,
  Might I to thee return!
In one dear glance of thine
  Sunshine and blessing burn.

The tree, whose bark still bears
  My name beside thine own,
The inclement tempest sears,
  Which joy away has blown.

The meadows' sparkling green
The blast makes sad like me,
By them no sun is seen,
Nor I Frederica see.

I go soon where the vine
With ripened grapes is crowned;
Where flows the new-made wine,
And all is life around.
Ah, were she with me here,
How blessed were my lot!
To her the fruit I'd bear,
And she, she'd give me what?

FREDERICA.*

She feeleth now with me Love's sway,
I won her gentle heart in play,
And from her heart mine is she now.
This blessing, Fate, thou gavest me,
Then let me ever constant be,
And teach me to deserve her thou.

* This poem and the two succeeding it were also found in the possession of Sophia Brion, and first published in 1838, by Stöber; but the three were given as one poem through some misunderstanding.

TO SESENHEIM.*

Ye golden children, soon I'll come!
In vain within our cheerful home
Will winter on us turn the key.

Before the fire our seats we'll take,
And glad we then our hearts will make,
And like the angels love will we.

* During Goethe's intercourse with Frederica, an uninterrupted correspondence was carried on between them, the whole of which is lost, with the exception of one letter from the poet to her. The letters in Pfeiffer's *Goethe's Friedrike* are spurious. Occasionally the correspondence seems to have assumed a poetical form, as in this piece and that entitled *At Table*.

And little garlands we will wind,
And little posies we will bind,*
And little children we will be.

* A reference to the social game of *Strausswinden* perhaps.—*Pfeiffer's Friedrike.*

AT TABLE.

Your knight is seated at the place,
Dear girls, was on his way ye said.
His horse went on with lingering pace,
Nor faster on his spirit sped.

At table now content I sit,
And finish my adventure here;
A few boiled eggs and just a bit
Of roasted fish my only fare.

The night indeed was somewhat dark,
My sorrel stumbled on like blind;
And yet I found the way as well, as his the clerk
To early Sunday prayers can find.

WHEN I WAS IN SAARBRÜCKEN.

Where art thou now, sweet maid, forgotten ne'er?
Where singest thou?
Where smiles the field, the city triumphs where,
That holds thee now?

Since thou art gone, the sun no longer shines,
And now with me
The sky in tender, tearful sorrow joins,
To weep for thee.

Away with thee is all our pleasure gone;
And silent vale
And hamlet now; and after thee hath flown
The nightingale.

Oh come! call swain and flocks distressed to thee,
So far away;
Come soon again, or else 'twill winter be
In time of May.

LOTTE.

THE UGLY FACE.*

When of a worthy gentleman,
A pastor, or an alderman,
A likeness cut on copper-plate,
With rugged rhyme to illustrate,
Is ordered by his widowed mate,
It means: see here with head and ears,
The reverend, well-born man appears.
Behold his lofty brow and eyes;
But then his intellect, so wise
And useful to the commonweal,
The graven face will not reveal.

* These verses were sent to Charlotte in 1774, with a silhouette likeness of himself, a fac-simile of which (and also of the verses), is given in Kestner's beautiful book. The letter accompanying the likeness contains an allusion to the expression "the ugly face," which, a note of Kestner's says, explains it; but the explanation needs explaining.

So means it, Lotte, here: I send
To thee a likeness of thy friend.
Thou'lt see the earnest forehead there,
The glowing eye, and flowing hair;
'Tis just about the ugly face:
But there my love thou canst not trace.

THE PILGRIM'S MORNING SONG.*

TO LILA.

The morning mists have rolled,
My Lila, round thy tower;
And shall I not behold
It in this parting hour!
But still around my heart
A thousand vivid forms
Of blessed memories dart,
At which my bosom warms.

* These verses were written on the morning on which he finally left Wetzlar. He addresses her as Lila, because it was a favorite poetic name of the time. By the tower is meant a square tower, supposed to be Roman, outside of Wetzlar; and he calls it *her* tower, because her walks were mostly towards it.

In the German, this poem is written without rhyme, in short irregular verse, not easy to reproduce in English. In the same manner is written another poem, called "Elysium," and addressed "To Urania," who is supposed to be that friend of Lotte, whose "Juno form" his blunt friend Merck preferred to Lotte herself.

How there it stood above,
A witness of my joy,
When full of trembling love,
At first the stranger boy
Into thy presence came;
And in his youthful heart
A never-ending flame
Thou suddenly didst dart!

Thou North, about my brow
May'st hiss with serpent tongue;
My head thou shalt not bow!
Bow down thou may'st the young
And feeble twig, from whom
Its mother sun is fled,
And on whose early bloom
Her love no more is shed.

Omnipresent Love! thou
Through my bosom glowest;
Thou to the storm my brow,
To dangers giv'st my breast.

A double life thou hast shed
Upon my withering breast:
With firmer step to tread,
In life to find new zest!

LILI.

NEW LOVE, NEW LIFE.*

Heart, my heart, what ails thee now?
Wherefore art thou so forlore?
What strange life now livest thou!
Scarce I recognize thee more.
All thou lovedst once is gone,
All in grief thou dwelledst on,
Gone thy labors, gone thy rest—
Ah, how cam'st thou so distressed!

Chains thy heart the blooming youth
Of yon lovely maiden form?
Hath that glance of love and truth
Bound thee by eternal charm?

* This poem was written in the first days of his acquaintance with Lili. The feelings in which it originated are described in the opening of the Seventeenth Book of the Autobiography.

If I strive from her to flee,
If of firmer heart to be,
Still my paths my footsteps guide
Ever back to her dear side.

And so by this magic thread,
  Which I strive to break in vain,
'Gainst my will the charming maid
  Holds me 'neath her ruthless reign ;
In her magic circle, I
Now must with her will comply,
Ah, how great the change to me !
Love ! oh Love ! oh set me free !

TO BELINDA.*

Wherefore dost thou draw me 'gainst my will
Into yonder light?
Was I not, poor youth, more happy still
In the lonesome night?

Peacefully I in my little room
In the moonlight lay,
Slumbering softly in the twilight gloom
Of its mournful ray;

* These verses were written at about the same period as the preceding. They express his dislike of the gay life which she led; and the discomfort which he felt at being obliged to see her in the presence of strangers, with whom he was expected to sit at the card table; and who perhaps occasioned him a little jealousy. If one may presume to say so, the verses are without merit.

And of golden moments there I dreamed,
When I should be blest,
And to feel thy cherished form I seemed
Deep within my breast.

Am I, too, not he, whom in such glare
Thou dost keep at play?
'Gainst the faces, which I cannot bear,
Thou dost oft array?

Not the bloom of early Spring more dear,
Angel, to my heart;
Where thou art, is love and goodness there,
Nature, where thou art.

UPON THE LAKE.*

In the open world a fresher food
I draw from Nature's breast;
A mother kind is she and good,
Who holds me there at rest!
The wave lifts up our boat in time
With the oarsman's steady beat,
And cloud-clad hills, that heaven climb,
Us on our journey meet.

Eye, mine eye, why dost thou droop?
Golden dreams, still do ye troop?
Flee, thou dream, though gold, afar!
Love and life here also are.

* Descriptive of a trip, with Lavater and others, up the lake of Zurich, during his separation from Lili.

In the waters blink
  Stars with flickering light;
Cloudy vapors drink
  On the distant height;
Morning breezes sweep
  Round the shaded bay;
Mirrored in the deep
  Waving harvests play.

FROM THE MOUNTAIN.*

If I, dearest Lili, loved thee not,
Me what joy would give a scene like this!
And yet, Lili, if I loved thee not,
Should I here or there e'er find my bliss?

* Having landed at Richterschwyl, and ascended the mountain, Goethe wrote these lines in a memorandum book. The last line has two readings.

TO A GOLDEN HEART WHICH HE WORE ON HIS NECK.*

Dear sign of pleasures passed away,
That ever to my heart art nigh,
Prolongest thou love's waning day?
Art stronger than the spirit-tie?

Lili, I go! But still to thee
Lovebound, I wander joylessly,

* Standing and looking down into Italy, and urged by his friend to descend to the beautiful plains of Lombardy, he hesitated, unwilling to leave behind him the Germany, that held all he loved, and especially "her, who was his destiny." He was about to yield to the wishes of his friend. "A little golden heart, which I had received from her in the most beautiful moments of our love, still hung by the same riband, to which she herself had fastened it, lovewarmed on my neck. I caught it and kissed it." He returned homeward.

And through far woods and valleys flee!
Ah! not so soon could Lili's heart
From mine so soon it could not part.

So some poor bird, which breaks its string,
And to the woods again flies home,
A fragment of his bond will bring
Where'er he may in freedom roam;
It is the old freeborn bird no more,
To some one hath belonged before.

SADNESS.*

Ah, sweet roses, now ye perish,
You my darling never wore;
One ye bloomed for, who can cherish,
Brokenhearted, hope no more!

On those days I linger weeping,
Which in love with thee I spent,
And watch for the first bud keeping,
Early in my garden went;

* "This poem expresses," says Goethe, "the sweetness of my sorrow"—*i. e.* at the period when the relation to Lili was about to close. He does not mean that the verses were written in reference to those feelings; but they are inserted here, as he associates them with Lili. The song is in the Singspiel *Erwin und Elmire.*

On those days when fruit and blossom
Still I carried to thy feet,
And before thy face my bosom
Still with love and hope would beat.

Ah, sweet roses, now ye perish,
You my darling never wore;
One ye bloomed for, who can cherish,
Brokenhearted, hope no more!

LILI'S MENAGERIE.*

THERE'S no menagerie I vow
With my sweet Lili's can compare!
She has the strangest beasts in there,
And gets them in, she knows not how.
Oh, how they hop and run, poor things,
And flounder with their blunted wings,
The princes over whom she reigns,
In love's tormenting endless pains!

* The commercial relations of Lili's father, brought many visitors to the house, young, middle-aged, and old; and some with alarming advantages of fortune. All of them moreover pretended to an interest in the lovely daughter. The jealousy which the lover naturally experienced under these circumstances, found utterance in the poem *Lili's Park*, where the numerous suitors of Lili are represented as under enchantment, and changed by her power into the forms of various beasts, Goethe himself being the bear.

The fairy's name? Lili? Seek nought of her to know!
For if ye know her not, then thank your fate 'tis so.

Oh, what a cackling, what a clacking,
Whene'er she in the doorway stands,
And holds the fodder-basket in her hands!
Oh, what a croaking, what a quacking!
The trees, the bushes seem to be alive:
And rushing forward, whole herds strive
To reach her feet: the fishes in the basin too
Impatient splash with noses out:
She scatters then the food about,
And with a look would ravish gods, to say
Nought of the beasts. And then begins a picking,
And such a sipping, such a licking!
They plunging come head over head,
And push and press and pull away,
And chase and fight and bite away,
And all about a bit of bread,
Which dry, tastes from her lovely hands, I ween,
As though it in ambrosia had been.

And then the look! The tone,

With which she calls, Pipi! Pipi!
Would draw Jove's eagle from his throne;
And Venus' doves would flock,
And e'en the vain peacock
Would come. They'd come, I swear,
If they her voice afar should only hear.

And so from out the forest's night
To obey her rule, she did a rude
And unlicked bear delude,
And 'mong the tame ones put the wight,
And tame hath made him with the rest:
But only to a certain point, 'tis understood!
How beautiful, and ah! how good
She seemed to be! My blood I would have even
To water her red roses given.

Thou sayest *I!* Who? How, sir? Where?
Well, then, sirs, plainly: I'm the bear;
Caught in a silken net alas!
And by a thread bound to her feet;
But how it all has come to pass,

Relate some other time I may,
I am too furious for't to-day.

For as I in the corner stay,
And from afar I hear the clatter,
And how they flutter all, and chatter,
I turn and scowl
And growl,
And backwards run a little way,
And round I scowl
And growl,
And run again a little way,
And turn at last again and scowl.

A sudden rage then in me glows,
There snorts a mighty spirit through my nose,
And rages all the nature of the bear.
What! thou a fool, a simple hare!
A squirrel, good for nought but nuts to crack!
I bristle up my shaggy back,
That never slave had been.

I'm jeered by every garden tree!
I hurry from the bowling green,
And from the pretty smooth-mowed grass;
The box makes faces as I pass,
And in the darkest grove I flee
To struggle through the hedges hence,
Or leap above the boarded fence!
But I can neither climb nor bound:
Enchantment weighs me to the ground.
Again enchantment binds me fast,
I waste my strength, and wearied out at last,
I lay me down beside the waterfall,
And champ, and weep, and roll myself half dead,
But porcelain Oreads only hear my call,
Nor heed my cries for aid.

Ah, suddenly there overpower
What sweet sensations all my limbs!
'Tis she, who sings there in her bower!
Again the dear, dear voice I hear:
With blossoms scented is the air.
Ah! does she sing perchance that I may hear?

The shrubbery breaks beneath my foot,
Yield tree and bush before my mad career,
And so—lies at her feet the brute.

She looks: "A monster! well, 'tis odd!
To be a bear it is too mild,
And for a poodle much too wild,
So shaggy, awkward, such a clod!"
His back she scratches with her foot so small;
He seems in Paradise to be.
His seven senses tingle all,
While calm and all unmoved is she.
I kiss her shoe, and gnaw the heel
As well behaved as could a bruin be;
I gently raise myself, and steal
So softly to her knee! She lets it be—
Ah, happy day! She strokes my ear,
And wantonly then slaps she me;
I snarl, in joy a new-born bear;
She bids me then with merry, wanton thought:
Allons tout doux! eh la menotte!
Et faites serviteur,

Comme un joli seigneur.
She so goes on with play and glee ;
Still hopes the oft-deluded fool ;
But should he make himself too free,
She brings him soon beneath her rule.

She has a flask of balsam too,
No honey equals it on earth,
Of which she, softened by his love and worth,
A drop puts on her finger tip,
And rubs her monster's thirsty lip,
And flees again, and leaves me all alone ;
And I then, though unloosed, still groan
In bonds ; I follow her, though free,
I seek her, and again I flee—
And so she lets the poor one go his way,
Nor gives his griefs and joys a sigh ;
Sometimes she lets the gate half open stay,
And watches slyly, whether I will fly.

And I!—Ye gods, if in your hands it be,
To set me from this sorcery free ;

How shall I bless you, when I am free at length !
But help ye not the poor unhappy wretch—
Not all in vain my limbs I so can stretch :
I feel't ! I swear't ! I feel I yet have strength.

LILI.*

Lili, thou who wast so long
All my joy, my only song,
All my sorrow thou art now,
But still all my song art thou.

* These verses are not in Goethe's works. They are found in a letter from him to the Duke of Saxe Weimar (quoted in Viehoff). He says: "As in the night I approached the Fichtengebirge, the feeling of the past, of my destiny, and my love, came over me, and I sang thus to myself."

FRAU VON STEIN.

CHAPPED LIPS.*

Who hears my plaint? To whom shall I complain?
And he who hears me, will he mourn my pain?
Alas! these lips, which hers so oft have blessed,
And sweetly grateful, hers again have pressed,
Are bruised and split, and scarce for pain can move.
And yet they are not hurt, because my love,
Too wildly fond, with eager kiss hath seized
The lip and bitten, her young fancy pleased
To think her precious friend more sure enjoyed:
Alas! the tender lip hath been destroyed,

* This poem was sent, in 1776, in a letter to Frau von Stein, and was published in 1789. But the early form of it differed greatly from the later. It was nearly double in length, and entitled, *To the Spirit of Johannes Secundus.* The "Basia" of Secundus appear to have given rise to it. See Lehman's *Goethe's Liebe und Liebesgeschichte*, where the earlier form of the poem is given.

Because the cutting winter wind hath played
Across my face with keen and cruel blade.

But now the noble vine's sweet juice I'll warm
With honey gathered from the busy swarm,
And hope that joy thereby may be restored;
But what relief alas! will that afford,
If Love therein his balm shall not have poured?

NIGHT THOUGHTS.*

Despite your beauty and your high estate,
Unhappy stars, I pity you your fate,
The roaming mariner who gladly guide,
Without reward, across the foaming tide:
For ye are not loved, neither do ye love!
Unceasingly in your career above
Ye move across the dark expanse of heaven;
And through what space ye have already driven,
While I have, by the side of love, of night,
And, hapless stars, of you, forgot the flight!

* Sent to Frau von Stein, September 20th, 1781.—Schöll.

THE WANDERER'S NIGHT SONG.*

Thou who the child of Heaven art,
Who transports and sorrows stillest,
Who the doubly wretched heart
Doubly with thy comfort fillest.
Ah, when will my yearning cease!
What avails or joy or grief?
Blessed peace,
Bring, ah bring my heart relief!

* This piece was written February 12th, 1776, as a note to Frau von Stein.—See Schöll's *Goethe's Briefe an Frau von Stein.*

TO THE MOON.*

Over vale and grove thy glance
Still and hazy gleams,
Thou'lt dissolve my soul perchance
In thy peaceful beams.

Soothingly thy glances lie
O'er the meadow spread,
As the light of friendship's eye
O'er my fate is shed.

Echoes of the past I hear
Joyous days and sad,

* A young lady, named Von Lassberg, believing herself deserted by her lover, drowned herself in the Ilm, in 1778. The incident gave rise to this poem. As originally written and sent to Frau von Stein, in January, 1778, it was much shorter and differed considerably in expression.

Lonely while I wander here
Sorrowful and glad.

Onward flow, sweet river, on!
Joy I ne'er shall know!
So have kiss and laughter gone,
Faith and honor so.

What to all so precious is,
I too once possessed!
May it e'er for woe be his,
Ever in his breast!

Murmur, stream, the vale along,
As thou restless go'st,
Murmur, whisper to my song
Music whilst thou flow'st!

When in winter night thy tide
Angrily thou swell'st,
Or around the vernal pride
Of the blossoms well'st.

Blest, who void of hate enfolds
'Gainst the world the heart,
On her breast a friend who holds
Joy with him to part!

What by man hath ne'er been guessed,
Ne'er been known aright,
Through the labyrinth of the breast
Wanders in the night.

TO THE NEW YEAR, 1779.*

Thou mak'st the aged young, the youthful old,
Mak'st cold the warm, and warm the cold,
Art grave in sport, and makes thee smile the grave.
To thee a kindly genius gave
His ancient privilege o'er men here below,
Of woe their weal to make, their weal of woe.

* Sent to Frau von Stein on the new year of 1779.—See Schöll.

A MIDNIGHT FAIRY SONG.*

At midnight, when asleep are men at length,
Then shines for us the moon,
  Then gleams for us the star,
We rove and dance and sing,
  Nor gay till then we are.

At midnight, when asleep are men at length,
We seek the alder grove,
  And in the pale moonbeam,
We rove about and sing,
  And gaily dance a dream.

* Sent to Frau von Stein in a note of 14–15 October, 1780.—See Schöll.

"As I was sketching for thee by the Ilm, on the 29th June, 1776, between noon and one."—Note to Frau von Stein, July 2d, 1776.—Schöll.

HERE tracing Nature in repose,
New pangs my heart its early sorrows give.
I ever live for sake of those,
For sake of whom I should not live.

TO LIDA.*

That only one thy heart hath known,
Thou rightly callest thine alone;
For only thine he e'er can be:
For since I turned away from thee,
To me life's hurried tumult seems
A slender gauze, and through it gleams,
As through some fleecy cloud, thy form,
That faithful beams on me and warm:
So through the Northlight's streaming bars
There glisten the eternal stars.

* Addressed to Frau von Stein, in October, 1781.—Schöll's Correspondence.

NEARNESS.*

How oft thou art, beloved girl,
I know not how, from me estranged!
When midst the throng of men we are, the whirl
Of life my pleasure all dismisses;
When the noise is for peace and darkness changed,
Again I know thee by thy kisses.

* Supposed to belong to the "Lida" poems, and therefore to Frau von Stein.

THE CHOSEN STONE.*

The lover thought of her he loved in silence here,
And said glad-hearted, Thou, oh Stone, shalt witness bear!
But be not proud, thou many a comrade hast, believe;
To every stone upon the field, whereof I live,
To every tree, which in the wood I wander by,
Memorial be of joy! I consecrating cry.
But voice to thee alone I give, as midst the throng
On one alone the Muse bestows the gift of song.

* "Descending the winding path on the other side (in Goethe's garden), I found a stone, surrounded by shrubbery, in which was cut this verse from the well-known poem—

Hier im Stillen gedachte der Liebende seiner Geliebten;

and I felt that I stood on classic ground."—Eckermann, 1824.

"On a slab let into the tuff wall may be read the inscription, which in Goethe's poems is entitled *The Chosen Stone*—An act of homage to Frau von Stein."—Vehse—Höfe des Hauses Sachsen.

FOREVER.*

To whatsoever thing of highest good,
Within earth's bounds, man names celestial gives,
Harmonious truth, which e'er unwavering stood,
And friendship, which without suspicion lives;
The light which through the sage's lonely thinking plays,
And burns in forms of beauty, which the bard surround;
That had I all in those my happiest days
In her discerned, and for myself I found.

* It is supposed that this piece was intended to form part of the unfinished poem, *Die Geheimnisse.* Frau von Stein is the person alluded to in it.

PHILOMELA.*

Thee truly Love, O songstress, reared himself and fed;
He held, the childlike god, the food upon his dart;
And so the poison through thy harmless throat he spread,
That with the force of love strikes Philomel the heart.

* Sent to Frau von Stein in a note of 26th May, 1782; but somewhat differently expressed. It was subsequently placed under the figure of a Cupid, feeding a nightingale with an arrow, in the park at Tiefurt.

FROM

WILHELM MEISTER.

MIGNON.*

Know'st thou the land, where bright the citrons bloom,
The golden orange glows in leafy gloom,
A gentle breeze from the azure heavens blows,
The myrtle calm, and high the laurel grows?
Know'st thou the land?
That way! that way,
With thee, beloved, gladly would I stray.

Know'st thou the house? Its roof on columns rests,
And hall and room a golden glory vests,
The marble forms look down upon me mild,
And say: What have they done to thee, poor child?
Know'st thou the house?

* See the *Lehrjahre*, Book 3, Chapter 1.

That way! that way,
With thee would I, oh my protector, stray.

Know'st thou the mountain, and its misty path?
His way through clouds the mule to search for hath;
In caverns dwells the dragon's aged brood;
The rock leaps down, and over it the flood.
Know'st thou the mount?
That way! that way,
Oh father! let us now together stray.

MIGNON.*

Oh! bid me not reveal, but silence keep,
For duty is to me my secret now;
All would I show that in my heart lies deep,
But that, alas, my fate will not allow.

The sun at early morn breaks up the rest
Of night, and o'er her face his glory flings;
The solid rock unlocks its stony breast,
And grudges not to Earth the hidden springs.

All in the arms of friendship seek repose,
And there the breast its sorrows may reveal;
But, bound by my oath, I must ever close
The lips, which only can my God unseal.

* See the *Lehrjahre*, Book 5, Chapter 16.

MIGNON.*

So let me seem, until I be;
Take not away my robe of white!
Now from the lovely Earth I flee
Down to the strong abode of Night.

In peace I there awhile will rest,
Then will mine eye again awake;
I there will leave the snowy vest,
The girdle and the wreath forsake.

The souls in that angelic sphere
They sex without regard behold,
Nor robes, nor floating garments there
The bright transfigured form enfold.

* See the *Lehrjahre*, Book 8, Chapter 2.

From trouble free I lived, 'tis true,
Yet I have known enough of pain.
Through grief too early old I grew!
Give me eternal youth again!

MIGNON.*

Who only love have known
Can know my pain!
Of pleasure reft, and lone,
My sight I strain
That side where he hath flown,
But still in vain.
Who me hath loved and known
Hath fled again.
My head is giddy grown,
And burns my brain.
Who only love have known
Can know my pain!

* See the *Lehrjahre*, Book 4, Chapter 11.

THE MINSTREL.*

"Without the gate what hear I there,
What on the drawbridge sound?
The music let before us here
Within our hall resound!"
Thus spoke the king, the page he sped;
The youth returned, the monarch said:
"Bring here the old man in!"

"My lords, by me ye greeted are,
And ye, ye lovely dames!
What gorgeous heaven! star on star!
Who may declare their names?
Mid grandeur here, and state sublime
Ye eyes be closed; here is no time
The ravished sight to feed."

* See the *Lehrjahre*, Book 2, Chapter 11.

And now the Minstrel closed his eyes,
Of war and love he sang;
He makes the warriors' spirit rise,
Their heads the beauties hang.
The monarch, whom had pleased the strain,
As guerdon meet, a golden chain
Then for him bade them bring.

"Give not to me the chain of gold,
The chain your knights may take,
The knights before whose bearing bold
Your foes their lances break.
Or let it else your chancellor wear,
The golden burden let him bear,
With those he bears e'en now.

"I sing my song, as sings the bird
Which 'mong the branches dwells;
The song that from the throat is poured,
All guerdon far excels;
But may I crave, one thing I ask:
In purest gold let me a flask
Of best of wine be brought."

He raised the cup, he drank it all:
Oh, sweet refreshing draught!
"Oh! on the house will blessings fall,
Where gifts like these are quaffed!
If fare ye well, then think on me,
And let your thanks as ardent be
To God, as mine to you."

GRIEF IN SOLITUDE.*

Ah! he who loves a lonesome lot,
His wish may soon obtain;
All live and love, and heed him not,
And leave him to his pain.
Yea, leave me to my woe!
And if true solitude could, oh,
By me be known,
I'd then be not alone.

Alone if she he loves may be,
A youth steals near to know.
And so there creeps on lonely me
By night and day my woe,

* See the *Lehrjahre*, Book 2, Chapter 13.

By night and day my grief.
Ah! could I find relief
From sorrow in the tomb,
'Twould leave me to its gloom!

THE BREAD OF TEARS.*

Who never eat in tears his bread,
Who through the wretched nights hath not
Sat lonely weeping on his bed,
Ne'er, heavenly powers, on you hath thought!

Ye into life conduct us all,
Ye let the poor one lose his worth,
Then let him into misery fall:
For guilt is all avenged on earth.

* See the *Lehrjahre*, Book 2, Chapter 13.

FRAGMENTS OF SONG.*

To the doors I'll softly steal,
Modest bearing I will show;
Pious hands will give a meal,
On my way I then will go.

Happy each to be will seem,
When before him I appear;
In his eye a tear will gleam,
I not know what calls it there.

To him the morning sunbeams shed
Their light across the sky in flames,
And falling wrecked around his head
Fair Nature's form his guilt proclaims.†

* See the *Lehrjahre*, Book 5, Chapter 14.

† See ibid. Book 4, Chapter 1.

PHILINE.*

Sing ye not in mournful strain
Of the loneliness of night;
No, ye fair, for then there reign
Social gladness and delight.

As the man received the wife,
As his fairest half to be,
Is the night the half of life,
And the fairest half is she.

Happy can ye be by day,
Which but interrupts our bliss?
Good it is to while away;
Good it is for nought but this.

* This is sung by Philine in one of the most agreeable scenes in the *Lehrjahre*. See Book 5, Chapter 10.

But at silent evening, when
Lamps with softened twilight glow,
And from mouth to mouth there then
Wit and love fast overflow;

When the wilful, wanton boy,
Who escapes us through the day,
Midst caresses then to toy,
Often we induce to stay;

When her song the nightingale
Warbling near by lovers hear,
Which to broken hearts a wail
Seems of sorrow and despair:

What sweet thoughts the striking clock
Rouses in your gentle breast,
When midnight's deliberate stroke
Safety promises and rest!

On the tedious day, therefore,
Mark it, dearest friend, aright!
Every day has plagues a score,
And the night has its delight.

PHILINE'S SONG.*

The shepherd for the dance was dressed
With chaplet, scarf, and dandy vest;
Was sprucely decked the beau.
The peasants round the linden had
Already swarmed, and danced like mad.
Hurrah! hurrah!
Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!
So went the fiddle bow.

To join the dance he pressed along,
And with his elbow 'mid the throng
A girl he gave a blow;
Upon him turned the maiden quick,

* When the Harper first appears in Wilhelm Meister, and finishes his own song, Philine asks him if he knows the air, "*The shepherd for the dance was dressed.*" The old man plays, and she sings a song, which is not given in Meister, but is found in Faust, where it is sung by the peasants under the linden.

And said: "Now, that's a stupid trick!
Hurrah! hurrah!
Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!
Be not so very low!"

But swiftly in the crowd they bound,
And right and left they waltz around,
And skirts a flying go.
They soon grow red, they soon grow warm,
And panting, rest them arm in arm,
Hurrah! hurrah!
Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!
And hip against elbów.

"Not so familiar, please," she said!
"For many a maid hath been betrayed,
And falsely left, you know."
But still he flattered her aside,
And from the linden echoed wide,
Hurrah! hurrah!
Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!
The shouts and fiddle bow.

THE BARON AND THE POET.

Poor devil I, my lord barón,*
I envy you your rank so great,
Your place of honor near the throne,
And many a fair and broad estate,
Your father's castle long renowned,
His fowling-piece and hunting-ground.

Poor devil me, my lord barón,
Me envy you, so it appears,
That mother Nature on her son
Hath lavished gifts from early years.
A free heart I, though poor, 'tis true,
Was born, yet not a dunce like you.

* In order to preserve the form of the original, which is in this case a part of the wit, to the word "baron" has been given the pronunciation which it has in the German, *i. e.* the last syllable is accented, not the first.

Now I propose, my lord barón,
We matters leave just as you see:
Do you remain your father's son,
And I my mother's child will be.
To envy then let's bid adieu,
Each other's honors covet not:
No place upon Parnassus you,
Nor in the peerage, I your lot.

THE WANDERER'S SONG.*

From the mountain to the hills,
Down and through the vale along,
There the air a fluttering fills,
Floats around a sound of song.
To the unchecked wish to rove
Counsel and delight succeed;
Let thy striving be in Love,
And thy life, let it be Deed.

Every tie is torn away;
False the heart where I relied;
Can I know, or can I say
What mishap may yet betide?

* See the *Wanderjahre*, Book 3, Chapter 1.

Now I part and wander on;
Like a widowed one I mourn;
To another 'stead the one,
Still and still again to turn.

Rest not of the soil a part;
In the wide world boldly roam!
Strong of arm and strong of heart,
Everywhere are they at home.
Where we in the sunshine bask,
Put we every care aside;
Every clime to give we ask,
Therefore is the world so wide.

FROM

FAUST.

THE SONG OF THE ARCHANGELS,

IN FAUST.

RAPHAEL.

The Sun still chants his ancient song,
Contending with his brother suns,
And thundering in his path along
His foreordained course he runs.
To angels giveth strength the sight,
Though fathom none the mystery may;
Profound the mighty works and bright,
As erst upon the eldest day.

GABRIEL.

The Earth whirls round in splendid state,
With wonderful and rapid flight;
And Eden's glories alternate
With the deep, awful gloom of night;

Against the rocks' firm base the sea
In foaming billows wastes its force;
And onward rock and ocean flee
In everlasting planet course.

MICHAEL.

And howling storms a war maintain
From land to sea, from sea to land,
And raging form a mighty chain
Around of deep effect and grand.
The lightning's havoc flashes there,
Before the thunder's path it plays;
But, Lord, thy servants, they revere
The peaceful tenor of thy days.

THE CHORUS.

To angels giveth strength the sight,
Though fathom none thy mystery may;
Sublime are all thy works and bright,
As erst upon the eldest day.

THE KING IN THULE.*

In Thule there lived of old
A king true to the grave,
To whom a cup of gold
His mistress dying gave.

He cherished nothing more,
He drained it every draught;
With tears his eyes ran o'er,
Whenever he from it quaffed.

And when his death was near,
His cities he reckoned up:
All gave he to his heir,
But gave him not the cup.

* Faithfulness, even unto death, says Viehoff, is the theme of the poem.

Amid his warriors all,
  At royal board sat he,
In his forefathers' hall
  In his castle by the sea.

There the old carouser stood,
  And drank of draughts his last,
And down into the flood
  The sacred goblet cast.

He saw it plunge and fill,
  And sink deep in the main.
His sinking eye grew still;
  Drank never a drop again.

GRETCHEN.

My peace is gone,
  My heart is sad;
Nor e'er again
  Shall I be glad.

Where he's not near
The grave is there;
The world is all
To me but gall.

My weary head
  Alas! is crazed;
My wretched soul
  Is all amazed.

My peace is gone,
  My heart is sad;
Nor e'er again
  Shall I be glad.

For him alone
  I watch the long, long day,
For him alone
  From home I stray.

His lofty step,
  His noble mien,
His mouth's sweet smile,
  His flashing een.

What magic flow
  Of words is his!
His thrilling grasp,
  And ah, his kiss!

My peace is gone,
  My heart is sad;
Nor e'er again
  Shall I be glad.

To be with him
  How yearns my breast!
Ah, could I hold
  Him here at rest!

And kiss my love
  So long I would,
Die on his lips
  Away I should!

MEPHISTOPHELES SINGS.

What dost thou there,
His door so near,
Sweet Kitty here,
So early in the morning?
Have, have a care!
Thou'lt go in there,
A maiden there,
A maiden not returning.

Take, maiden, heed!
If done the deed,
Thy shame shall speed,
Thy ruin shall not linger!
Him make not blest,
Thou lovest best,
Till he hath pressed
The ring upon thy finger!

LEIPZIG POEMS.

THE BEAUTIFUL NIGHT.*

Now I leave this little place,
My beloved maiden's home,
And with lonely, silent pace,
Through the gloomy forest roam.
Copse and oak the moon breaks through,
Summer winds before her play,
And the bending birches strew
Incense in her silver way.

How I revel in the air
Of this lovely summer night!

* This was one of Goethe's earliest pieces, and was included in the first volume published by him, as were also those entitled *Girlish Wishes*, *Love's Grave*, *Motives*, *Change*, *Joy*, *Joys and Dreams*, and *Two Threats*.

Oh, how sweet to feel 'tis here
What perfects the soul's delight!
Scarcely I can grasp the bliss;
And yet I would give to thee,
Heaven, a thousand nights like this,
Gave my love but one to me.

GIRLISH WISHES.

Oh, found could there be
A husband for me!
How nice 'twould be, ah!
They'd call me mamma;
No more I would sew,
No more to school go;
My servants I'd scold,
By no one controlled;
I'd choose, I suppose,
Clothes-maker and clothes;
I'd go and make calls,
And go to the balls,
And not ask papa,
Nor even mamma.

CHANGE.

I LIE in the brook on the pebbles, how clear!
And spread out my arms to the wave coming near;
It wooingly presses my amorous breast,
Then lightly it sweeps down the stream to the main;
Now comes on the second, caressing again:
And so in each alternate pleasure I'm blest.

And yet, and so sadly, thou wastest away
The preciousest moments of Life's passing day,
Because from her thoughts thee the maiden dismissed!
The times that have vanished, oh once more repeat!
The lips of the second will kiss e'en so sweet,
As scarcely the lips of the first one have kissed.

LOVE'S GRAVE.

Weep, maiden, here by the grave of Love; here
He fell to earth by chance, by nothing slain.
But is he truly dead? I would not swear:
A chance, a nothing wakes him oft again.

MOTIVES.

When to a girl, who to us cleaves,
Her mother serious lessons gives
Of duty, and I know not what,
And her the maiden follows not,
  But flieth in still warmer fashion
To meet our eager kisses still;
Why then, there has therein self-will,
  'Tis sure, as great a share as passion.

But if the mother should not fail,
But on the docile heart prevail,
And of her teaching proud, she sees,
That coy the maiden from us flees;
  She understandeth not young beauty:
For if do that a girl we see,
There has therein inconstancy,
  'Tis sure, a greater share than duty.

JOY.

About the fountain hovers
The changing dragon-fly,
New tints still, still discovers
My long-delighted eye;
And with chameleon sheen,
Now red, now blue and green,
And blue again, 'tis seen.
Oh, could I be but nearer,
To see its colors clearer!

It floats and whirrs, and resteth not!
See! now 'tis on the willow tree.
Ah, I the pretty thing have caught!
And now I have a closer view,
I only see a sombre blue—

So 'tis, thou analyst of joy, with thee!

JOYS AND DREAMS.

Oft to the altar thou hast dreamed
That we to go together seemed,
As husband I, and thou as bride.
Oft from thy lips awake I snatched,
When thou unguarded hast not watched,
The kisses thou hadst else denied.

The purest joy that we have known,
Of many a happy hour hath flown
With its delight, like time, the bliss.
That I enjoy, what boots it me?
Like dreams the warmest kisses flee,
And all our pleasures like a kiss.

TWO THREATS.*

My maiden I did after go,
Once deep within the wood,
And fell upon her neck, when "Oh!"
She threatened, scream she would.

Then cried I proudly: "I will kill
Him who to come shall dare!"—
"Still!" whispered she: "Beloved, still!
Lest some one thee should hear."

* Its original title was, *The Scream: from the Italian.*

SONGS.

THE FAREWELL.

Ah! let mine eye the farewell say,
  Which now my lips in vain would speak;
How hard to tear myself away!
  And yet I am not always weak.

How sorrowful in this dark hour
  Is e'en the sweetest pledge of love!
Thy lip's cold kiss hath lost its power,
  Thy hand's faint grasp no more can move.

Ah, once a playful, stolen kiss,
  What rapture did it with it bring!
There fills the heart with joy like this,
  A violet plucked in early spring.

But garlands now no more I braid,
Now roses pluck no more for thee.
It now is Spring, beloved maid,
But Autumn 'tis, alas, to me!

TO THE DISTANT.*

And have I truly lost thee, then?
Oh fairest! from me hast thou flown?
In Memory's ear there rings again
Thine every once familiar tone.

As when at morn the traveller's eye
All vainly pierces through the air,
When, hidden in the azure sky,
The lark his song is singing there:

So longing, love, thy form to see
Through field and wood my sight I strain;
In every song I call on thee:
Beloved! come to me again!

* Supposed to refer to Frederica.

BY THE RIVER.

To the ocean of oblivion you,
My cherished songs, the stream shall bring!
You no delighted youth anew,
Nor maiden in her bloom shall sing.

'Twas of my love ye sang alone;
But now her words my love deride.
The water ye were written on;
Away with it then also glide.

MARCH.

We've had of snow a fall,
For time it is not yet,
That by the blossoms all,
That by the blossoms all,
Our gladdened sight be met.

The sunshine brightly plays
With soft deceiving light,
The swallow too betrays,
The swallow too betrays,
Alone upon its flight!

E'en if the spring be near,
  Lone should it gladden me?
But come we in a pair,
But come we in a pair,
  At once 'twill summer be.

THE SHEPHERD.*

There was a lazy swain,
Of seven sleepers' strain,
Him worried not his sheep.

His heart a maiden caught:
Lorn was the shepherd's lot,
Gone appetite and sleep!

Abroad it drove the wight,
The stars he counts at night,
And o'er his love must weep.

* This song is among the collected "Lieder," but it is also in the *Singspiel*, *Jery und Bätely*, where it is sung by Thomas in derision of Jery's melancholy.

But now she him hath ta'en,
It all is come again,
Thirst, appetite, and sleep.

THE HUNTSMAN'S EVENING SONG.

I SILENT through the meadows stray,
My gun upon my arm,
And sweetly seems thy form to play,
Before mine eyes thy form.

Perchance thou calmly too dost rove
Sweet field and valley through,
And doth my passing form not move
Sometimes before thee too?

Of him, who roameth through the earth,
Of joy and hope bereft,
To East and West who wanders forth,
Because he thee hath left.

It seems, whene'er I think on thee,
Like gazing on the moon;
A peaceful calmness comes to me,
I know not whence the boon.

THE PRUDE.*

On a lovely springtime morning
Passed the shepherdess and sung,
Young and fair, and sorrow scorning,
Till it through the meadows rung,
So la la! leralla, &c.

Thyrsis for a kiss made offer
Two, three lambs, upon the spot;
Roguish smiled she at the proffer;
Laughed and sung, but yielded not,
So la la! leralla, &c.

* This song and the next one were written for introduction into an opera brought out at the Weimar Theatre.

Ribbons now another tendered,
Offered then his heart a third;
She for heart and ribbons rendered,
As for lambs, a jesting word,
But la la! leralla, &c.

THE CONVERT.

When the evening sky was glowing,
Still I passed the wood along,
Damon there his flute was blowing;
Through the rocks the echoes rung,
So la la, &c.

Down beside him there he drew me,
Sweetly kissed me then the swain;
And I bid him, and he blew me,
Gentle youth, his strains again,
So la la, &c.

Now hath peace my heart forsaken,
All my pleasures disappear,
And there in mine ears can waken
Only now the sweet old air,
So la la, leralla, &c.

IN SUMMER.*

How mead and field
With dew are filled!
What pearly showers
Weigh down the flowers!
How through the trees
Fresh blows the breeze!
How sweetly in the morning ray
The warbling birds salute the day!

But ah! where I
My love stood by,

* This poem was first printed anonymously in a periodical. Later it was claimed by both Jacobi and Goethe. It is included in Goethe's works, but it is not settled that he was the author of it. See Viehoff-Goethe erlaütert.

Yon room so small,
And mean withal,
So deep amid
The leaflets hid,
Where was the bright Earth far and wide,
With all its summer morning pride!

MAY SONG.

'Twixt the wheat and corn,
'Twixt the hedge and thorn
'Twixt the grass and tree,
Where goes sweetheart?
That tell me!

Found my love
Not at home;
Gone the dove
Hath to roam.
Blooms and blows
Bright the May;
Darling goes
Blithe and gay.

By the rocky brook,
Where that kiss I took,
That first in the grass,
Somewhat I see!
Is that she?

THE SPIRIT'S GREETING.*

High on the ancient turret stands
The hero's noble spectre form;
And as the bark sweeps by his lands,
He bids it speed against the storm.

"These sinews once were powerful,
This heart as steadfast was and wild,
These bones of warrior's marrow full,
With generous wine my goblet filled;"

* In the summer of 1774, Goethe made a journey with Lavater and Basedow along the Rhine, and coming down the Lahn to Coblentz, at the sight of a remarkable castle ruin, he wrote this piece, which he says was admired. The poem was written in Lips' Album, who accompanied Lavater as draughtsman.

The moral which the spirit intends to point is not very obvious.

"The half my life I passed in fray,
The other half spun out at rest,
But, little bark, thou on thy way,
The waves shall ever, ever breast!"

NIGHT.*

Fairest half of life, oh Night!
Day's alluring, lovely friend,
That thy sable mantle might,
Falling, on my form descend!

In young Beauty's arms rewarded,
Resteth now contented love;
And to passion disregarded,
After lonely longing past,
Dreams love's image bring at last.

* In the fourth act of the vaudeville, *Scherz, List und Rache*, Scapin and his wife invoke the Night to cover their deeds; and sing its praises. These verses, a part of their eulogy, deserve to be rescued from the companionship in which they occur.

Fairest half of life, oh Night!
Day's alluring, lovely friend,
That thy sable mantle might,
Falling, on my form descend!

NEARNESS OF THE BELOVED.

I THINK of thee, when the sun's midday rays
From Ocean beam;
I think of thee, when the faint moonlight plays
Across the stream.

I see thee, when upon the distant way
The dust blows high;
In darkness, when on lonely path astray
We fearful fly.

I hear thee too, whene'er with hollow roar
The billows rise;
Ofttimes I listen, when in grove obscure
The last sound dies.

I am near thee, however far thou art,
Yea, thou art near!
The sun goes down, soon starlight glads my heart.
Would thou wert here!

TO LINA.*

Beloved, if e'er chance permit
These songs to reach again thy hand,
Deign at thy harpsichord to sit,
Where once thy friend was wont to stand.

Let then its chords with spirit ring,
The words then in the volume see;
But read them not! still ever sing,
And every leaf shall be for thee!

For ah! how sadly to mine eye
Must, black on white, that song appear,
Which from thy lips, can deify,
That from thy lips, a heart can tear!

* This poem is supposed by Viehoff to have reference to Lotte, but on insufficient grounds.

MAY SONG.

How nature is
  With beauty filled!
How bright the sun!
  How smiles the field!

From every twig
  The blossoms burst,
A thousand songs
  From every hurst.

And love and mirth
  From every breast.
Oh sun! Oh earth!
  Oh joy! Oh rest!

Oh love! Oh love!
So golden bright,
Like morning clouds
On yonder height!

Thou blessest all
The fertile ground,
With swelling buds
The world around.

Oh maiden! maid!
How love I thee!
How bright thine eye!
How lov'st thou me!

So loves the lark
The air and song,
So morning flowers
For breezes long,

As I love thee
With warmth and truth,

Thou who giv'st joy
And strength and youth

For every song
And dance to me.
As me thou lov'st
Blest may'st thou be!

SELF-DECEPTION.

My neighbor's curtain to and fro
Forever moving keeps.
To see if I'm at home or no,
Across the way she peeps.

And if the jealous humor too,
Which I indulged to-day,
As now it will henceforward do,
Still in my heart has sway,

Alas, I see, no thoughts like these
The lovely girl betrays.
It only is the evening breeze,
Which with the curtain plays.

NOVEMBER SONG.

To th' archer sing, but not to him,
To whom the sun flies on,
Through whom his distant face is dim,
With clouds across it drawn;

But sacred to the boy this song,
Who 'midst the roses games,
And who the gentle hearts among
His timely arrow aims.

To us through him the winter's eve,
So dreary else and tame,
Full many a cherished friend doth give
And many a charming dame.

Henceforward shall the radiant child
Among the stars be met,
And on us kindly shall and mild
Forever rise and set.

SYMPATHY.*

When the vineyard blossoms blow,
In the cask then moves the wine;
When again the roses glow,
I cannot my heart divine.

Down my cheeks run tears of fire,
Leave or do I what I may;
But an undefined desire
Feel I through my bosom play.

* "It is said, that there is a sympathy between the wine in the cellar, and the vine. The former is observed to work in a remarkable manner, when the vine puts forth its buds."—*Redding on Wines.*

Henderson explains it: "In spring, the renewal of fermentation is produced by the transition from cold to heat."—*Hend. on Wines.*

This influence was not confined to the vine. "According to the old philosophers, the water distilled from roses suffered in its strength during the blossoming of the rose."—*Richter's Hesperus*, 34° *Hundsposttag.*

And confess I must at last,
When I think, that it must be,
That in such sweet seasons past,
Doris once love felt for me.

APRIL, OR SPEAKING EYES.

Eyes, ye eyes, what do ye say?
Charming are your words, I own,
Words of clearest, sweetest tone;
And ye ask the same sweet way.

But I think I have divined:
In the depths of those bright eyes,
True and fond, a heart there lies,
Now o'er to itself resigned,

Which with joy would overflow,
Mid so many dull and blind,
One dear glance at last to find,
Which would how to prize it know.

And the while that I your cipher
Deeply study to explain,
Do ye also, bright eyes, deign
My own glances to decipher!

WITH A GOLD CHAIN.*

A CHAINLET this to thee will bring,
Accustomed pliantly to fold,
That longs about thy neck to cling
With many hundred links of gold.

Vouchsafe the fool its wish, I pray,
It is not bold—a harmless chain;
With it thy neck thou'lt grace by day,
And cast it off at eve again.

But brings to thee some one *that* chain,
Of stronger hold and greater weight,
I shall, Lisette, not blame thee then,
If thou awhile shouldst hesitate.

* The commentators do not attempt to discover what these two chains may symbolize. Perhaps the lighter is Love, the heavier Marriage. It is not known who Lisette was.

THE WILD ROSE.*

Once a youth a rosebud found,
Rosebud on the lea,
So with morning beauty crowned,
Nearer he did quickly bound,
Saw 't delighted he.
Rosebud, rosebud, rosebud red,
Rosebud on the lea.

Said the youth: "I'll pluck thee now,
Rosebud on the lea!"

* This poem appears in Herder's collection of popular songs in a form scarcely different from that in Goethe's Poems. Both Lehmann (*Goethe's Liebe, &c.*), and Viehoff (*Goethe erläutert*) speak of it as obtained by Herder, "aus dem Munde des Volkes." A note in Simrock's *Volkslieder* says, that it was communicated to Herder by Goethe, and that it is a genuine Volkslied. And yet it is one of the most admired of Goethe's songs.

Rosebud said: "I'll stick, I vow,
That thou'lt not forget I trow,
It shall never be.
Rosebud, rosebud, rosebud red,
Rosebud on the lea."

Still the wanton youth would pluck
Th' rosebud on the lea,
Rosebud struggled hard and stuck,
No one helped her evil luck;
It must even be.
Rosebud, rosebud, rosebud red,
Rosebud on the lea.

THE SHEPHERD'S LAMENT.*

Up yonder upon the hill,
  There leaning upon my crook,
I a thousand times stand still,
  And down in the valley look.

The flocks I follow then,
  My dog he watches them well;
I've come down here to the plain,
  And how I cannot tell.

* Goethe pretended to each of two ladies, that he had composed this poem for her. Unfortunately, one of them boasting to the other of the fact, the treachery was discovered; and the poet badly scolded. The Baroness Egloffstein is mentioned by Vehse, as the lady to whom it was dedicated; while Viehoff says, the Countess of E. Probably the same person.

The meadow where'er I go
With lovely flow'rets is gay ;
I pluck them, but do not know
To whom to give them away.

And thunder and tempest and rain
I pass here under the tree ;
But shut is the door in the glen ;
Alas, 'tis a dream to me !

Above that cottage yon
A beautiful rainbow stands !
But she away is gone,
Away to the stranger lands.

Away from me she has gone,
Perhaps far over the lake.
Move on, ye sheep, move on !
The shepherd's heart will break.

THE WEST WIND.*

Ah ! thy moist and balmy wing,
West Wind, how I envy thee :
Tidings thou to him canst bring,
How I mourn from him to be !

Softly float thy pinions by,
Longing wakening in my breast ;

* This song and the three following are from the *Divan*, an entire volume of minor poems, written in an Eastern spirit and manner. There is but little to please in the volume, and these pieces have been selected as among the best.

At the close of a social evening, when the first of these songs was sung by Madame Eberwein, whose husband had set to music many of the pieces from the *Divan*, Goethe is reported by Eckermann as saying : " I have observed this evening that these songs of the *Divan* have lost all relation to me. Whatever is Oriental and passionate in them lives in me no longer. It is like the sloughed skin of the snake, which he has left lying in the path."

And in tears beneath thee lie
Blossom, field, and mountain crest.

But thy soft and soothing breath
Cools my weeping eyelids' pain;
Ah! in grief I'd find my death,
Hoped I not to meet again.

Hasten to my loved one, then,
Gently tell him all I feel;
But lest thou shouldst give him pain,
All my griefs from him conceal.

Say to him, but blushing say,
Only in his love I live;
Joy in love and life to-day
Would to me his presence give.

SEPARATION.

In thy glances to rejoice,
On thy breast, and in thy kiss,
Listening to thy gentle voice
Was my last and earliest bliss.

Yestern 'twas, alas, the last;
Light mine eyes deserted then;
Every pleasure of the past
Now a burden is and pain.

Should the fates not heed my prayers
To again unite us soon,
Give occasion but for tears
Would to me world, sun, and moon.

THE THIEF.

Occasion makes not thieves or theft,
The greatest thief of all is she;
For what there in my heart was left
Of love, hath stolen she from me.

And all of it to thee she gave,
The all that I of life possessed,
That I, impoverished, life must crave
From thee, and on thy mercy rest.

Already is with pity fraught
The pearly lustre of thine eye,
And I a new and happier lot
Henceforth shall in thine arms enjoy.

LIFE, OR THE GAME OF GOOSE.

Our life a game of goose is like:
The more we forward flee,
The sooner we the goal will strike
Where no one likes to be.

That geese are stupid, tell us men:
Believe them not, I say;
For one looks backwards now and then,
To guide me on the way.

On earth, where onward hurry all,
Quite different 'tis, we find:
If one should stumble or should fall,
Not one would look behind.

SONNETS AND ELEGIES.

SHE WRITES.*

A GLANCE from thy dear eyes deep in mine own,
A kiss from thy sweet lips impressed on mine—
Could aught by me, who in my heart enshrine
Such knowledge, be beside as joyous known?
Away from thee, estranged, bereaved, and lone,
Within one circle I my thoughts confine,
And ever to that moment they incline,
The only one; then I must weep and moan.
The tears soon unperceived again are dry:

* These sonnets have been claimed by Bettina Brentano and her friends, as having been addressed to her; and as having been constructed out of the substance of her letters to Goethe. In Lewes's Life, the honor of having called them forth is given to Minna Herzlieb, whom Goethe represented as Ottilie in the *Elective Affinities*. No one can read the Brentano correspondence, without being persuaded that the letters were formed out of the sonnets, or the sonnets out of the letters.

His love, I think, comes here to this retreat—
Shouldst thou not back again to him reach thine?
Ah! hear the lisping of my love's reply;
My one joy on earth is thy wish to meet,
To me so friendly; give thy friend a sign!

SHE WRITES AGAIN.

Why do I to my pen return again?
That, dearest, not so closely ask, I pray:
For truly I to thee have nought to say;
But if it come to thee 'tis not in vain.
What I send thee shall, since I must remain,
Mine undivided heart before thee lay,
And hopes and fears, transports and joys display,
To which nor beginning nor end pertain.
Nought of to-day confide to thee I would,
How turns in fancies, wishes, hopes, and thought,
My faithful heart my absent friend to greet:
So once to see thee I before thee stood,
And silent stood. Could I have spoken aught?
Then was my being in itself complete.

SHE CANNOT CEASE.

If I should send the unwritten page to thee,
Nor letters I should first upon it trace,
Perchance for sport thou'dst fill the vacant space,
And send it back again to happy me.
Should I behold the azure cover then;
How curious, as becomes a woman, I
Would tear it, so that nought should 'scape mine eye,
And read what once I raptured heard again:
Sweet heart! Mine only life! My precious dove!
As thou didst spoil me, and so kindly still
With honied words my longing heart before.
And e'en I seemed to read those whispers, love,
With which so fondly thou my soul didst fill,
And conscious beauty gav'st me evermore.

THE MAIDEN SPEAKS.

Thou art so grave, beloved! To thy form
Of marble here I well might thee compare;
Thou dost like that a lifeless aspect wear;
And by thy side the very stone seems warm.
Behind his shield a foe conceals his face,
An open brow we in a friend should see.
I seek thee, but thou striv'st t' escape from me;
Ah! stay, nor to thine image yield thy place.
To which of them shall I address me now?
Must I in each be met by icy brow,
Though lifeless this, and thou with life be graced?
In brief, that I no more my words may waste,
This lifeless statue I will clasp and kiss,
Till thou art jealous of the marble's bliss.

THE RESOLUTION.

Should I by habit then to her be bound?
That would at last but misery be to me.
To-day then I will strive to set me free,
Nor at the accustomed beauty's side be found.
But how shall I atone to thee, my heart,
That on it I with thee do not advise?
Well then! come here! And we will breathe our sighs
In pensive tones, that we from her must part.
See, it can be done! At the poet's call,
Melodious tones quick through the lyre swell,
To make to love a cordial offering.
'Twas scarcely thought, and see! 'tis finished all;
But now, what then?—At once, methinks, 'twere well
Before herself we hastened it to sing.

FRIENDLY MEETING.

Enfolded in my ample cloak, at night
Along the mountain pathway's rough descent,
Down to the wintry plains below I went,
My mind disturbed, and seeking peace in flight.
The newborn day was suddenly revealed:
A maiden came, in glorious heavenly bloom;
A type she was of those sweet women, whom
The poet dreams. Then was my longing stilled.
But turned myself away, and let her go,
And wrapped me closer in the folds, as though
I proudly in myself myself would warm;
But followed still. She stood. My heart by storm
Was ta'en! Nor in my cloak could longer stay:
I cast it off, and in my arms she lay.

GROWTH.

A GENTLE-MANNERED child, on many a morn,
You skipped with me through meadow, grass, and corn,
"For such a daughter, with what tender care,
As father blessing I would fain prepare!"
And when at length you into life 'gan look,
You duties for your highest pleasure took.
"So dear a sister! Safe I then would be:
How I in her would trust, and she in me!"
But nought can now your lovely growth restrain,
And in my breast I feel love's keenest pain.
Shall I embrace the maid, to calm my heart?
Ah! as a princess now to me thou art:
By beauty thou hast been so princely made,
Before one fleeting glance I bow my head.

WARNING.

At judgment, when the final trump is heard,
And we no longer on the earth may live,
We shall be called upon account to give,
Before our Judge, of every idle word.
With all those words, how will it be now there,
In which to thee my hope to win thy heart
I did so full of tenderness impart,
Since all have fall'n unheeded on thine ear?
Examine then thy conscience, dearest maid!
Consider well how long thou hast delayed,
Lest such misfortune should the world befall.
For if I then must give account of all,
That I to thee did ever vainly say,
A year at least will last the judgment day.

ELEGY.*

Ye stones, oh tell, oh make me, ye palaces, wise!
Oh speak, ye ways, one word! Dost not, oh Genius, rise?
Yea all, eternal Rome, within thy holy wall
Is quick with life; to me alone is silent all.
Oh! who will whisper at what window here above
The maiden I may find, who fired my soul with love?

* A letter from Schiller to Körner, quoted by Vehse, speaks of "a young Roman maiden of low origin," with whom G. had had an engagement, and whom he had even married. On this Vehse remarks, that it seems to refer to the young Milanese, whom Goethe had given up on learning that she was betrothed. In Lewes's Life, it is denied that the G. in Schiller's letter refers to Goethe. The poems called the Roman Elegies are, in Lewes and Viehoff, stated to have been addressed to Christiane Vulpius; but it is possible, that the poet had also in his mind "*Die schöne Mailänderin*" of the Italian journey.

Know I not yet the paths, whereby so many an hour
Of precious time I gave to seek and leave her bower?
Yet palace, ruin, church, and column I did scan,
As profits by his travel a judicious man.
But soon 'tis past; then will one only temple be,
The shrine of Love, that opens to its devotee.
A world thou art, oh Rome; but were they not the home
Of love, the world were not the world, nor Rome were
Rome.

ELEGY.

Repent not, dearest, that so quickly thou to me
Didst yield! Believe, not boldly do I think of thee.
Alike wound not the shafts of love: but scratch a part,
And from the subtle poison sickens long the heart.
But feathered strong, with polished point and fatal aim
Drive others deeply home, and soon the blood inflame.
In th' old heroic times, when o'er the gods above
Love ruled, love followed sight, fruition followed love.
Think'st thou that Venus long against her passion strove,
When once Anchises pleased her in the Idæan grove?
Had Luna tarried, ere the sleeping youth she kissed,
Her joy she soon had through Aurora's envy missed.
'Mid festal sounds Leander met fair Hero's sight,
And in the flood plunged th' ardent lover night by night.

The royal virgin, Ilia, down to Tiber's strand
Descends, and grasps the maid the god's enamoured hand.
Thus Mars his sons begot! Behold! the godlike twins
A she-wolf feeds, and o'er the world Rome empire wins.

ELEGY.

Disgusts me many a sound, but most to hear
A dog I hate; its yelping rends my ear.
One only dog oft hear I with delight:
The dog, which guards my neighbor's house by night.
For as she stole to me, my own sweet maid
He barked at once, and near our love betrayed.
And barks he now, I think: 'tis she again!
Or think of how the looked-for child came then.

BALLADS.

THE ERLKING.*

Who rides in the night through tempest so wild?
The father it is, and with him his child;
He safely the young boy has in his arm,
He holds him securely, and keeps him warm.

"Why fearful, my son, thy face dost thou hide?"—
"Dost, father, not see the Erlking by my side?
The Erlking there with his tail and his crown?"—
"'Tis only a streak of the mist, my son."

* Herder translated from the Danish a poem to which Goethe was indebted for the idea of his Erlkönig. We naturally imagine that this Demon derives his name from *erle*, the alder tree, and this was Goethe's notion. But we learn from Viehoff, that the word *erl* belongs to the same etymological family as *elf*, and that the word *könig* is a mistranslation by Herder and Goethe, of the Danish *kone*, signifying a woman; so that Erlkönig is not the Alderking, but the Fairywoman. Dortchen sings the verses at the opening of *Die Fischerin*.

"Thou darling child, come go with me!
I'll play the prettiest games with thee;
With many a flower the strand is dressed,
My mother has many a golden vest."

"My father, my father, dost thou not hear,
What Erlking has promised me in my ear?"—
"Rest quiet, my child, and be not afraid;
For only the wind with dry leaves hath played."

"Wilt come, pretty boy, and go home with me?
My daughters shall sweetly wait upon thee;
My daughters a nightly festival keep,
And shall dance, and rock, and sing thee to sleep."

"My father, my father, seest thou not
The Erlking's daughters in yonder dark spot?"—
"My son, my son, yes, I see it full clear:
The hoary old willows are shining there."

"I love thee, and love thy beauty, sweet boy;
And force thee I must, if thou art so coy."

"Oh father! he takes me now by the arm!
The Erlking, father, hath done me a harm!"

He urges his horse with horror oppressed;
The suffering child he holds to his breast;
He reaches the court with trouble and dread,
And there the poor child in his arms lay dead.

THE BEAUTIFUL FLOWER.*

THE LAY OF THE CAPTIVE COUNT.

THE COUNT.

A FLOW'RET wondrous fair I know,
For it my heart is sighing;
To seek it I would gladly go,
But captive here am lying.
And more my weary heart is sad,
That while in freedom once, I had
The flow'ret ever near me.

* A fruit of his stay in Zurich, was the *Blümlein Wunderschön*. He probably read there Tschudi's Chronicle, and found in his account of the so-called *Zurich Massacre Night*, that the Count of Habsburg—Rapperswyl, who in 1350 joined a conspiracy against Zurich, and was taken prisoner, and locked up in the Wellenberg, made during his confinement the poem: Ich weiss ein blawes Blümlein, &c. Viehoff's Life of Goethe.

Around from this steep castle tower
Mine eyes forever hover,
And from the turret-top the flower
My sight cannot discover;
And who with it shall bless my sight,
Be vassal he, or belted knight,
Shall be my knightly brother.

THE ROSE.

In bloom of beauty hear I this,
Down here beneath thy grating;
For me, the Rose, it surely is,
Thou, noble knight, art waiting!
Thou of a lofty spirit art,
And surely also in thy heart
The garden queen is mistress.

THE COUNT.

Thy crimson in its emerald fold
We honor as the brightest;

And therefore thou, like pearls and gold,
The maiden's eye delightest.
The fairest face enhancest thou:
But thou art not the flower, I trow,
That silently I honor.

THE LILY.

A haughty heart hath yon proud Rose,
Her head she boldly raises;
But ever from the maiden flows
The Lily's meed of praises.
Wherever beats within its shrine
A heart as true and pure as mine,
The Lily there is dearest.

THE COUNT.

I know my soul is chaste and pure,
And free from evil feeling;
And yet a dungeon must endure,
A sorrow never healing.
Thou art to me a type, in sooth,

Of maiden purity and truth;
But still I know one dearer.

THE PINK.

That other then the Pink must be,
Here in the keeper's garden,
With so much care, how else on me
Would wait the aged warden?
I dwell among a leafy throng,
And scent the air the whole day long,
Amidst a thousand colors.

THE COUNT.

The Pink a man may not despise,
The gardener dear regards it;
Sometimes it in the sunlight lies,
Then from the sun he guards it.
But that which makes my heart to glow
Is not a vain and splendid show:
It is a gentle flow'ret.

THE VIOLET.

I stand concealed and modest here,
To speak I am not willing;
Yet right it is that I declare
What thoughts my mind are filling.
If I am it, thou worthy heart,
I grieve that I cannot impart
To thee my grateful fragrance.

THE COUNT.

The gentle Violet much I prize:
It is a modest blossom;
But it cannot the bitter sighs
Relieve, that fill my bosom.
But this to all I will confide:
Upon this mountain's rocky side
Cannot be found my darling.

But strays below, the streamlet nigh,
The truest wife in anguish,
And softly utters many a sigh,
While I a captive languish.

When she the blue flower breaks with thought
Of me, and says: Forget me not!
I in the distance feel it.

Yes, far away is felt love's might,
When heart to heart is cleaving;
I, therefore, midst the dungeon's night
Am still among the living.
And when 'most breaks my heart my lot,
I only cry: Forget me not!
And love again restores me.

THE VIOLET.*

A Violet on a meadow grew,
A modest flower, whom no one knew,
A charming thing in robe of blue.
A shepherd maid came gaily by,
With heedless step, and laughing eye,
That way, that way
She came, singing a song.

"Ah, were I but," the violet thought,
"The fairest flower that Nature wrought!
"Ah! but an hour the gift is sought,

* This pretty poem is introduced into the Lustspiel, *Erwin und Elmire*, where the slighted lover of Elmire is likened by her (now repentant) to the violet in the song.

It was written during the earlier part of the poet's acquaintance with Lili.

"Until the maid hath plucked and pressed
"Her violet lover on her breast!
"Ah but, ah but
"One little moment long!"

Alas! alas! the maiden passed,
Nor on the flower a thought she cast,
And crushed the gentle thing at last.
It sank and died, rejoicing yet,
That death it through the maid had met,
Through her, through her,
Yea, even at her feet.

TRAVELLER AND PEASANT MAID.

HE.

Canst thou, fair, unequalled peasant maid,
Here beneath this linden's spreading shade,
Where the wanderer finds a moment's ease,
Thirst and appetite with food appease?

SHE.

Wilt thou, traveller, here thy strength recruit,
Curdled cream, and bread thou'lt have, and fruit;
Thou canst only have the simplest fare,
At the very source in plenty here.

HE.

Memory seems to know thee, as I gaze,
Unforgotten grace of precious days!

Oftentimes I likenesses have seen;
But none like this where'er I have been.

SHE.

Scarcely strangely meets the wanderer's eyes
Oftentimes a soon-explained surprise.
Oft alike the blond and brown appear;
Beauty's charm they both alternate wear.

HE.

Not to-day did first my heart indeed
Beauty's homage to this form concede!
Then it was the brightest star of all,
In the decorated festal hall.

SHE.

If it please thee, then it well may chance
That I join in thy jocose romance:
Yes, in purple silk her form was dressed,
When upon her first thine eyes did rest.

HE.

No, indeed, that didst thou not devise!
Thee of that some spirit might apprize;
Thou hast, too, of jewels known perchance,
And of pearls that perished at thy glance.

SHE.

One thing, too, confided was to me:
That the fair one, thee again to see
In hope (I'm with shame confessing filled),
Many a castle in the air did build.

HE.

Drove me here and thither every storm!
Gold and honor sought in every form!
But how blessed, now my wanderings o'er,
I the noble image find once more!

SHE.

Not an image—thine eyes truly rest
On the daughter of the dispossessed;

And, as tenants on the lost estate,
Happy Helen and her brother yet.

HE.

But, on this magnificent abode
Hath the owner no regard bestowed?
Fertile fields, and meads, and pasturings,
Breezes heavenly mild, and gushing springs.

SHE.

Through the world he hath, however, run!
Much the orphans have by labor won;
We the lands will buy, if, as is said,
He that owns them should, indeed, be dead.

HE.

Lovely friend! they will, indeed, be sold;
By the owner I the terms was told;
But in nowise trifling is the price,
For nought less than Helen will suffice!

SHE.

Rank and wealth for us could not suffice!
Love hath then imagined this device?
See! my noble brother now returns;
What can he think, when of this he learns?

THE DANCE OF THE DEAD.

The warder looks out in the depth of the night
On the graves in a row as they lay;
The moon has on everything flooded its light,
And the churchyard as bright is as day.
There moves now a grave, and another one then:
And forth they are coming, the women and men,
In their white and encumbering shrouds.

And stretching themselves in a merry uproar,
For a dance now the skeletons crowd,
The old and the rich, and the young and the poor;
But their dancing is clogged by the shroud.
And bashfulness ruling no longer the dead,
They shake themselves all, and there scattered and spread
On the hillocks the winding-sheets lie.

And thigh-bone and leg now a tottering go,
As if mad is each gesture and trick;
And clicking and clacking, the bones move as though
'Twere the beating of time with a stick.
Their antics they seem to the warder so queer!
Then whispers the tempter, the rogue, in his ear:
"Go! and carry a winding-sheet off."

'Tis thought and 'tis done, and he now in his flight
To the church must for safety proceed.
And still there the moonlight is beaming so bright
On the hideous dance that they lead.
But this one and that one at last disappear,
One after another they sneak on their gear,
And they quickly are under the sod.

But one of them tumbles and stumbles behind,
And he gropes at the graves here and there;
But none of his comrades has been so unkind;
And his sheet he soon snuffs in the air.
He shakes at the door, and it dashes him back;
The warder is saved from the goblin's attack
By the crosses of brass on the door.

His shroud he must have, and th' advance of the night
For reflection affords him no time;
The old Gothic ornaments seizes the wight,
And aloft he begins now to climb.
Ah, now the old warder, poor fellow, is lost!
From volute to scroll onward reaches the ghost,
Like a long-legged spider he moves.

The warder is shaking and pallid with fear,
And would gladly restore what he took.
But falling, the corner—his end now is near—
Of the garment has caught on a hook.
Already is waning the light of the moon,
The clock thunders out a loud powerful ONE,
And the skeleton dashes below.

THE YOUTH AND THE MILL-STREAM.

THE YOUTH.

Where, crystal rivulet, dost thou flow
So gaily?
Thou hastest gladly on below
Still daily.
What is't thou seekest in the vale?
Hearken, and let me hear thy tale.

THE BROOK.

I was a streamlet once, my friend,
Free flowing;
They've cramped my course, that I should send,
In going,
My waters yonder wheel to lift,
And therefore am I full and swift.

THE YOUTH.

Quick to the mill with thoughtless heart
Thou flowest,
Nor what I feel the while we part
Thou knowest.
Sometimes perchance doth kindly look
The miller's maid upon the brook?

THE BROOK.

At early dawn she opes the mill,
And cometh
To bathe her sweet face in the rill,
That foameth.
Her bosom is so full and white,
It warms almost to steam, the sight.

THE YOUTH.

If make e'en of the stream she can
A lover;
What peace may then a fervid man
Discover?

If only once the maid is seen,
Her wilt thou ever seek, I ween.

THE BROOK.

Then headlong on the wheel I dash
Loud pouring,
The floats now in the water splash
With roaring.
When works the maid herself at length,
The water gathers better strength.

THE YOUTH.

The sorrows feeleth not thy breast,
That grieve me?
She smiles upon thee, then with jest,
Says, "Leave me!"
And sometimes dost thou backward move,
Enticed by some sweet look of love?

THE BROOK.

From near her 'tis so hard, so hard
The going:

I, winding through the mead, retard
My flowing;
And if the choice with me but lay,
I'd soon go o'er again the way.

THE YOUTH.

Now, sharer of my passion, I
Go sadly;
Perchance thou soon wilt murmur by
More gladly.
Go thou, and oft the maid apprise,
For what the youth in silence sighs.

DISTANT INFLUENCE.

The Queen she stands in her lordly hall,
Midst hundreds of candles' display;
And quickly flies her page at her call,
To bring her her purse for the play:
"It just to your hand
Doth on my table stand."
And the youth not a moment remained,
And the end of the castle soon gained.

And near the Queen her sherbet there sips
Of ladies the loveliest there.
The cup now broke so close to her lips,
The sight it was painful to bear.
Embarrassed, annoyed,
And her court-dress destroyed,

Not a moment the lady remained,
And the end of the castle soon gained.

The youth on his way now hastening came,
And met with the beauty in tears:
Now to no one 'twas known what a flame
There burnt in those bosoms of theirs;
Oh, how fortunate!
Oh, what auspicious fate!
One another they clasped breast to breast,
And midst kisses they heart to heart pressed.

But at last they have parted unseen;
To her chamber she to retreat;
While the page presses on to the queen,
Through swords and through fans to her feet.
The queen ascertained
That his doublet was stained:
Every secret to her did unfold,
Like the Princess of Sheba of old.

To the chief of her ladies she cried:
"But recently we did contend,

And you firmly the spirit denied
Afar could its influence send;
That Presence alone
By its traces was known;
And that nothing could work from afar,
No, not even in the heavens a star.

"Now behold! But just now at my side
The delicate sherbet was spilled,
And at once at a distance so wide
With stains the boy's doublet is filled.
Another go buy!
And because now that I
Have been pleased that my proof it supplied,
At my cost, lest your parents should chide."

GOODMAN AND GOODWIFE.*

To-morrow falls St. Martin's feast,
And Goody loves her man;
And so for him she puddings makes,
And bakes them in the pan.

In bed they both are lying now,
The driving west winds roar;
And to his wife old Gaffer says,
"Go fasten you the door."

"I'm rested scarce, and barely warmed,
How so should I repose?

* Goethe showed Eckermann an engraving from a picture by Ostade, representing the interior of a peasant dwelling, which contained only one room. "Here," said Goethe, "you have the scene of our Goodman and Goodwife." Eckermann, 1829.

And clapped it for a hundred years,
The door I would not close."

They thereupon a bargain struck
Quite softly in their ear,
That one the bolt should push, from whom
They first a word should hear.

At midnight came two travellers,
And knew not where they were;
The lamp was out, the hearth was dead,
They nought could see nor hear.

"Is then the cursed place bewitched?
All patience here we lose!"
But ne'er their ears a whisper reached,
For which the door accuse.

They eat the puddings, black and white,
And all old Goody heard;
And much she to herself did say,
But not aloud a word.

Says one, "My throat's so very dry,
I wish we had some schnapps!
In the open press that smells so well,
Some may be found perhaps.

"A little flask I thence will bring,—
How handy it is there!
I'll pass to you, and you to me,
And soon our strength repair."

But furious sprang old Gaffer up,
And thus did threatening say,
"Whoe'er it be, that drank my schnapps,
For it shall dearly pay!"

And now old Goody gave three leaps,
As lively as a colt:
"Old Gaffer, you have spoken first,
So you the door go bolt."

THE FISHERMAN.*

The water rushed, the water swelled,
  There sat a fisher there;
His angle calmly he beheld,
  Cool to his heart e'en near.
And lurking by the water side,
  Behold! it upward parts;
And from the agitated tide
  There forth a mermaid starts.

She sang to him, and thus she 'gan:
  "Why lurest thou my brood,
With wit of man, and craft of man,
  Up here to death delude?

* Goethe said: "The ballad merely expresses the delightful sensation of the water, which in summer entices us to bathe. There is nothing more in it."—*Eckermann's Conversations*, 1823.

Ah! knewest thou, what days below
The little fishes see,
E'en as thou art, thou down wouldst go,
And then wouldst happy be.

"Doth not the sun himself restore,
The moon not in the main?
Returns, refreshed, their face once more
Not doubly lovely then?
Lures not the deep, deep heaven thee,
The sea-reflected blue?
Thine own young face, which thou dost see,
Down in th' eternal dew?"

The water rushed, the water swelled,
And wet his naked feet;
His heart grew so with longing filled,
As him his love did greet.
She sang to him his heart to win;
To struggle now was vain:
Half drew she him, half sank he in,
And ne'er was seen again.

THE TRUSTY ECKART.*

"Oh, would we were further; oh, were I at home!
They come, they are coming, who through the night roam;
The terrible sisters are coming.
They hither are roving, will meet with us here,

* "The old German heroic lays sing of the trusty Eckart, who remained long in the memory of the people, on account of his integrity. He was a duke in Breisgau, and lord in Alsace, of the race of the Harlunge; and was guardian of two young Harlunge, nephews of the Emperor Ermenrich, and cousins of the renowned Dietrich von Bern. Ermenrich murdered the youths, whom Eckart avenged. The Harlunge had a great treasure, which was hidden in a mountain by enchantment, and the place of deposit was guarded by the spirit of Eckart, who warned away any that attempted to remove it; for it was to come at last to the rightful heir. But whether that be the same Eckart who sits before the mountain cavern in Thuringia, and goes about warning others against the 'furious host,' is hidden in the obscurity of the old traditions."—*Bechstein's Sagenbuch*, No. 29.

The story given by Goethe may be seen, with but little variation, in *Bechstein*, No. 501.

They come, and will drink up the weary-brought beer,
And leave us the pitchers but empty."

The children cling close, and so mutter their fears;
When there an old fellow before them appears:
"Ye children, now only be quiet!
The good folks are coming athirst from the chase,
And give them to drink of your beer with good grace,
Then friendly will be the unfriendly."

'Tis done as he said, and the Horror draws nigh,
And dark and so shadowy look as they fly,
And famously lap up and swallow.
The pitchers are empty, the beer is all gone;
The furious troop* are now hurrying on,
Along the wide valley and mountain.

The children go homeward in haste and forlore,
When joins them the honest old fellow once more:

* The superstition of "Das wüthende Heer," is found in many forms in various parts of Germany. They were Furies, who rushed through the air at night, with the sound of horns and hounds, and injuring all who fell in their way.—See *Bechstein*, Nos. 626 and 730.

"Ye darlings, now don't ye go weeping."—
"A scolding we'll get, and a whipping to-night."—
"No, never a bit of it, all will be right,
Just only be silent and listen.

"And he who advises and bids you obey,
'Tis he who delights with the children to play,
The faithful old fellow, old Eckart.
Ye often have heard of the wonderful elf;
Though none of you ever hath seen him himself,
But here is the proof now before you."

They come to the house, and the pitchers they place
Before the old people, with diffident face,
And look for the whipping and scolding.
But see! they are tasting: what excellent beer!
Again and again to the jugs they repair,
And still there's no end of the pitcher!

The marvel endures to the dawn of the day;
But ask them, the old ones, as much as they may:
"Pray, what to the pitchers has happened?"

The young ones delighted, have nothing to say;
But falter at last, and the secret betray,
And presently dry are the pitchers.

And if now, ye children, with countenance true,
A father, or teacher speaks ever to you,
Then hearken, and follow him strictly!
And though the tongue painfully lie in its hood,
To babble is harmful, and silence is good;
Then fills up the beer in the pitchers.

THE RUINED CASTLE.

THERE stands upon that mountain crag
An ancient castle in decay,
Where once behind the gate and door
There knight and horse in ambush lay.

But door and postern now are burnt,
And everywhere it is so still;
And o'er the crumbling ruins now
I clamber where it suits my will.

A cellar full of precious wine
Close by this very spot there lay;
But with the tankards no more comes
The smiling cellar-maid to-day.

The goblets now the maid hath ceased
The gathered guests to set before,
And for the priest, at holy feast,
The chalice she fills up no more.

The wanton squire the cup she hands
No more upon her way, I wis,
And for the passing gift the maid
No more receives the passing kiss.

For beams and rafters every one
Were long ago to ashes burned,
And chapel, stairs, and corridor
To ruins and to rubbish turned.

But, as with flask and music, I
Up to this castle's rocky site,
Upon a lovely summer day
With her, my darling, scaled the height;

A merry, cheerful sound there sprung
From out the ruin's desert rest,
And like the olden days there rung
Again the merry laugh and jest;

As ready were the stateliest rooms
Some noble guests to entertain,
As though from out that brave old time
A fianced pair had come again ;

As though within the chapel there
The worthy priest already stood,
And asked, if we'd each other take,
And smiling, we then said we would!

And then to deeply moving songs
That flow from hearts whose depths rejoice,
There listened 'stead the ancient throngs,
The echo's oft-repeating voice.

And as again towards the eve
The song and happy laugh were past,
His rays the glowing setting sun
Up to the rugged summit cast.

And bright the squire and maiden shine,
As lord and lady far and near;
The cup unhurried offers she,
And he unhurried thanks her there.

THE WIZARD'S APPRENTICE.*

Gone the hoary wizard now
Has for once from home away!
And his spirits now shall bow
All to me, and service pay;
Word I've marked and charm,
Watched his practice too,
And with spirit arm
Wonders I will do.
Hasten! Haste!
Haste away,
That there may
Water pour,
Richly streaming e'en to waste
For the bath flow more and more.

* The story is in Lucian's *Lie fancier*, where no doubt Goethe found it through Wieland's translation.

Come, old broom, thy work begin!
Here, this ragged garment take;
Servant thou long time hast been;
Now I'll thee my servant make!
Come, on two legs stand,
Head at top be placed,
Down now to the strand
With the bucket haste.
Hasten! Haste!
Haste away,
That there may
Water pour,
Richly streaming e'en to waste
For the bath flow more and more.

To the bank he runs amain;
At the stream he is, I swear,
Quick as lightning back again
With the water he is here;
Twice already gone!
How the basin swells!
Every pail anon
He with water fills!

Done! Have done!
Water thou
Hast enow
Hither brought.
Ah! it will not cease to run!
I've the magic word forgot!

Ah! the word by which at last
Now he should his shape resume.
Ah, he runs and brings so fast!
Would thou wert again the broom!
Still the waters gush,
Which he brings so quick,
And upon me rush
Torrents fast and thick.
This can I
Not allow;
Seize him now!
What a trick!
Ah, with what a fearful eye
On me glares the fiend stick!

Thou accursed child of hell!
Shall the house be wholly drowned?
Over every threshold swell
Water floods by thee unbound.
An atrocious broom,
Which will never hear!
Stick! that shape assume
Thou before didst bear!
Wilt not quit
Spite of all?
I will fall
On thee quick,
With the hatchet I will split
Thee in twain, thou hellish stick!

There he trailing comes again!
Soon as I upon thee spring,
Quickly, wretch, shalt thou be slain;
Hear the crashing hatchet ring!
Bravely, bravely done!
See, he is in twain!

Now my fears are gone,
Freely breathe again!
Ah, alas!
See each part
Quickly start
On its feet!
On its way a slave to pass!
Heaven, help me, I entreat!

How they run! And more and more
Wet it grows on stairs and hall.
Ah, what floods of water pour!
Oh my master! hear me call!
Ah, my master's here!
See, sir, my dismay!
Those I made appear,
Now I cannot lay.
"Still! Be still!
'Gain resume
Form of broom!
Spirits all
Only, yielding to his will,
Hear their aged master's call."

PARABLES.

POESY.

God to his children did impart
Good Order, Science, Law, and Art,
And gave to each celestial grace
The cruel lot of earth t' efface.
To earth from heaven they naked came,
And knew not what to do for shame;
On each a garment Poesy threw,
And thenceforth shame no more they knew.

THE FROGS.

A CERTAIN pond was frozen over;
The frogs, beneath their icy cover,
Could no more freely croak or leap;
They dreamed, however, half asleep,
That, by return of early spring,
They e'en like nightingales would sing.
The south wind came, the ice was thawed,
And soon the frogs were all abroad,
And seated now around the shore,
They croaked away as heretofore.

THE BUYERS.*

About the apple stall
The children gathered all,
And each one wished to buy;
With merry heart and eye
They take them from the heap,
And near and nearer peep
The longing, ruddy crew;
  But when the price they learnt,
The apples down they threw,
  As though their hands were burnt.

How he by buyers would be sought,
He who his wares should sell for nought!

* Written by Goethe at the fair at Karlsbad, 1820; and sent, in a somewhat different form, to his friend Zelter, in a note of May 2d, of that year. —*Viehoff, Goethe erläutert.*

POEMS.

Like painted windows poems be!
When from without we look within,
We only gloom and darkness see;
And by the vulgar* thus 'tis seen:
They all may well be sullen then,
And all their life may so remain.

But enter now inside awhile,
Within the old cathedral pile;
Now brilliant colors quickly shine,

* In the German, *Philister*. "The word *Philister* plays a great part in the cant of our young academical friends. It means every one who is no student, their professors excepted, and hence has become an epithet for a prosaic, tedious, and awkward fellow. It is derived from the bad Latin word *balistarius* (the French *belitre*), not from the Philistines of the Bible, as some persons suppose."—*Wolff's German Literature.*

And grace and history combine,
And from the show looks out design;
This, sons of God, will you delight:
Lift up your hearts, and glad your sight!

LEGEND.*

THERE met a holy man, one day,
Who in the wilderness had strayed,
A goaten-footed faun, who said:
"For me and mine, sir, will you pray,
That come to heaven at last we may:
We long among the saints t' abide."
To whom the holy man replied:
"Precarious, friend, is your request,
And hard to grant it is at best.
The angels you can ne'er salute,
For see, you have a goaten foot."

* This story (minus the asses' ears) is in Sir John Maundeville's *Voiage*, cap. 5; and a note on the place says, that it "is in the Life of Paul the Hermite, writ by St. Jerome."

The wild man answered thereupon:
"What has to you my goat foot done?
Unquestioned many do, I'm sure,
With asses' ears to heaven soar."

CUPID AND PSYCHE.

Once to the Muses it occurred
To Psyche, of the Poet's art
A thorough knowledge to impart;
The little soul still prose preferred.
And gladly would she leave her lyre,
E'en on the sweetest summer's night;
But Cupid came with glance of fire,
And soon her course was mastered quite.

THE DROPS OF NECTAR.

Her favorite when to gratify,
Prometheus, Pallas from on high,
Down to the earth a vessel brought,
With nectar of the heavens fraught,
With blessings there his men to fill,
And in their bosoms to instil
The impulse to artistic skill;
With hurried step her way she took,
That Jove might not upon her look;
And as the golden vessel shook,
Some drops of nectar from it down
Upon the emerald earth were thrown.

The busy bees then thither flocked,
And all industriously sucked;

The active butterfly, too, came
His little drop of sweets to claim;
Thither the ill-favored spider e'en
To creep and strongly suck was seen.

Ah! 'twas around a blessed food,
That these and other insects stood.
For now with man they share and part
The fairest of the blessings, Art.

MISCELLANEOUS.

BLINDMAN'S BUFF.*

Oh, sweet Theresa! why,
Why does your open eye
So soon to cold unkindness change!
Your eyes but just now bound
Me still so quickly found:
And just me, too, to catch was strange.

You caught me with such sleight,
And held me then so tight,
I sank upon your breast of snow.
Your eyes were scarce undone,
Ere all my joy was gone;
You coldly let the blindman go.

* This piece, and *Jack's Alive*, are referred by Viehoff to the period of his residence at Strasburg, before his acquaintance with Friederike.

He groped on here and there,
His limbs he wrested near,
And slapped and bantered was all round.
And if you love not me,
In darkness I shall be,
Like one whose eyes are always bound.

JACK'S ALIVE.*

After dinner, we young folk
Sat us in the shade;
Love came there, and *Jack's Alive*
Wished to play, he said.

* Zelter, who set this piece to music, wrote to Goethe: "Something is wanting to my composition, and, I suppose, it is the knowledge of the game." Goethe answered, describing the game: "You take a thin chip of wood, or else a wax taper, set fire to it, and let it burn awhile; then blow out the flame, leaving the glowing coal; then say, as fast as you can, these words:—

Stirbt der Fuchs, so gilt der Balg,
Lebt er lang, so wird er alt,
Lebt er, so lebt er,
Stirbt er, so stirbt er,
Man begräbt ihn nicht mit der Haut,
Das gereicht ihm zur Ehre.

You now give the glowing taper quickly to your neighbor, who repeats the same verse, and so on, until the burning coal expires in some one's hand, who must pay a forfeit."—*Lehmann, Goethe's Liebe, &c.*

Each of my companions sat
By his sweetheart's side!
Love then blew the taper out,
"Here it is!" he cried.

Each one as it glimmered, passed
Quickly round the brand,
Each one swiftly pressed it on
In his neighbor's hand.

Then to me from Dorilis
Laughingly it came;
Scarce my hand the torch had touched,
Burst it into flame.

Singes all my eyes and face,
Through my breast it sweeps,
Almost up above my head
Now in flames it leaps.

Stamped upon it: still it burns,
Spite of all I strive,
'Stead of dying, here was *Jack*,
In my hand, alive.

RESCUE.

My faithless girl from me had gone,
That made me be a pleasure hater;
I hurried to a running water,
The water flowed before me on.

Despairing there I stood astound;
My head went round as I were drunken,
Almost I in the stream had sunken,
The world about me whirled around.

Then heard I somewhat calling there—
I turned to whence the voice proceeded—
A voice it was that all exceeded:
It said: "The stream is deep, beware!"

My blood then bounded through my heart,
A maiden 'tis with look of pity;
I ask her name, she answers: "Kitty!"
Oh, lovely Kate, how kind thou art!

From death thou hast delivered me,
I'll thank thee for my life forever;
But then I that shall value never,
Unless my life's delight thou'lt be!

I told her of my sorrow then,
She downward cast her eyes discreetly;
I kissed her, and she kissed me sweetly,
And—not a word of death again.

VANITAS! VANITATUM VANITAS!

On nothing I have set my heart,
Hurrah!
I've so in life a glorious part;
Hurrah!
And comrade who will be of mine,
Must lend a hand, with me must join,
To drink these dregs of wine.

I set my heart on goods and gold,
Hurrah!
And so on pleasure lost my hold;
Ah! ah!
The pieces scattered here and there,
To catch them if I scrambled here,
The other side they were.

On women next my heart I set,
Hurrah!
And thereby got me many a fret;
Ah! ah!
Another fere the faithless sought,
A tiresome time the constant brought:
The best could not be bought.

On travel then I set my mind,
Hurrah!
My country's customs left behind;
Ah! ah!
But nowhere could I find delight,
The fare was strange, bad beds at night,
None understood me right.

I set my heart upon renown,
Hurrah!
And see! another won the crown;
Ah! ah!
When honor I myself had done,
From all I envious glances won,
And satisfied were none.

I set my heart on battle's din,
Hurrah!
And many a victory we did win;
Hurrah!
Through hostile lands our army crossed,
And not much less our friends it cost,
And I a leg, too, lost.

My heart on nought is set, in fine,
Hurrah!
And now the wide, wide world is mine;
Hurrah!
The feast and song now soon must stop;
But we must drink the dregs all up:
Must drink out every drop!

OPEN HOUSE.

Many a guest to-day to see
Round my board I wish!
Ready are the viands all,
Poultry, game, and fish.
Bidden they already are,
Here they said they'd be.
Johnny, go and take a look!
Tell me whom you see!

Pretty maidens I expect,
Nought they know amiss;
Not that 'tis a pretty thing,
Him they love to kiss.

They have been invited all,
Here they said they'd be.
Johnny, go and take a look!
Tell me whom you see!

Ladies, too, I hope to see,
Who to love their spouse,
Grew he crosser every day,
Still would keep their vows.
Invitations they have had,
Here they said they'd be.
Johnny, go and take a look!
Tell me whom you see!

Summoned, too, young gentlemen,
Not at all elate,
Who are unassuming still,
Spite their purse's weight.
These especially I asked,
Here they said they'd be.
Johnny, go and take a look!
Tell me whom you see!

Men I asked, too, with respect,
Who, except their wives,
Would upon the fairest face
Look not for their lives.
Answered was the compliment,
Here they said they'd be.
Johnny, go and take a look!
Tell me whom you see!

Poets, too, I begged to come,
To the joy to add,
Who another's lay to hear
'Stead their own are glad.
All of these agreed to come,
Here they said they'd be.
Johnny, go and take a look!
Tell me whom you see!

But I no one coming see,
None are at their post.
Done's the soup and boils away,
Burnt will be the roast.

Too punctilious we have been,
Now, I fear, we'll see!
Johnny, say, what do you think?
No one here will be.

Johnny, run and tarry not,
Other guests go call!
Each one as he is, for that
Best is after all!
Known already 'tis in town,
To it all agree.
Johnny, open wide the doors:
How they're coming, see!

A MULTIFORM LOVER.

I WOULD I were a trout,
Swift swimming about;
And cam'st thou a fishing,
I'd bite at thy wishing.
I would I were a trout,
Swift swimming about.

I would I were a steed,
And worthy thy meed.
Oh were I a chariot
To carry thee, Harriet!
I would I were a steed,
And worthy thy meed.

I would that I were gold,
And riches untold;
And went'st thou a buying,
I'd ever come flying.
I would that I were gold,
And riches untold.

I would I were true,
My love ever new;
My troth I would give thee,
And never would leave thee.
I would I were true,
My love ever new.

I would I were old,
And wrinkled and cold;
And wouldst thou not bless me,
It should not distress me.
I would I were old,
And wrinkled and cold.

If a monkey I were,
With his antics so rare;
Did anything tease thee,
With tricks I would please thee.
If a monkey I were,
With his antics so rare.

Like a sheep were I mild,
Like the lion so wild;
Like lynxes sharp-sighted;
Like foxes deep-sleighted.
Like a sheep were I mild;
Like the lion so wild.

Whate'er I might be,
I'd give it to thee;
With princely gifts laden
Should have me, my maiden.
Whate'er I might be,
I'd give it to thee.

But I am what you know,
Then take me just so!
Wouldst better discover,
Let make thee a lover.
But I am what you know,
So take me just so!

THE HAPPY COUPLE.

See, since this April rain,
For which we warmly prayed,
What blessings, wife, again
Our meadows now pervade.
Just disappears the view
Far in the bluish mist;
Here love is ever new,
Here fortune still a guest.

And yonder, see that pair
Of snow-white doves, that go
To those sunny bowers, where
The double violets blow.

We first together bound
The flowers we gathered there,
And there, too, first we found
How dearly loved we were.

When from the altar, dear,
And after that sweet Yes,
With many a youthful pair
The parson saw us press;
On us then rose, and run
New suns and moons their race,
And we the world had won
Our earthly course to trace.

And many another seal
Us still more strongly bound,
In woods, upon the hill,
In groves, on meadow ground,
'Mid ruined walls, in caves,
Upon the clefted height,
E'en by the lakeside waves
Young love his torch did light.

We labored on content,
And thought us two to be;
But fate not so had meant,
For see! we soon were three,
And four, and five, and six,
They sat around the pot,
And now our sturdy chicks
Above our heads have shot.

And on yon meadow ground
The newly builded house,
Which poplar brooks surround
So pleasant looks to us.
Who is't that cheerful cot
There for himself hath made?
Is't with his darling not
Our boy, our noble Fred?

Where through the narrow ghyll
The mountain torrent sweeps,
And foaming by the mill
Upon the wheel it leaps:

Of miller maids, we hear
How beautiful they are;
But we've a child down there,
That is more lovely far.

And where the grassy green
Is o'er the churchyard spread,
The hoary pine is seen
To lift to Heaven its head;
Our too untimely dead
There by the pine tree lie,
And from the grave is led
To Heaven our hopeful eye.

See on the hillside dance
Of flashing arms the wave!
They come with sword and lance
Who peace their country gave.
Who is't with ribbon blue
So proudly steps before?
I thought our child I knew,
So comes our Charles once more.

And to the bride now straight
Her dearest guest is led;
When peace they celebrate
Her lover she shall wed;
The wedding dance to grace
Shall youth and maiden press,
And then our darling's face
With garlands thou shalt dress;

With flute and flageolet
The time again be here,
When in the dance *we* met
A young and joyous pair,
And ere the year be gone,
What raptures through me glow!
With grandson and with son*
We'll to the christening go.

* The natural meaning seems to be, that they will accompany the lately married son to the christening of the grandson; but a conversation with Goethe (Eckermann, 1828) shows, that the old man means, that his joy at his son's wedding will so bring back his young memories, that he will accompany to the font his grandson, and *a newly born son of his own.*

THE SPRING ORACLE.*

Oh cuckoo, prophetic bird,
With the early blossoms heard!
To a youthful loving pair
In the charming early year,

* The gift of prophecy was attributed, in the old German folklore, to the cuckoo above all birds; and even at the present day, this superstition is preserved in many parts of Germany. Whosoever first hears the cuckoo's cry in the spring, may learn from it the number of years they have to live. In Lower Saxony they invoke the bird in these words:—

Kuckuck vam Häven,
Wo lange sall ik leven?

And as many times as he cries, so many years are allotted to the questioner. In Sweden, he foretells to maidens how many years they will remain unmarried.—*Goethe erläutert.*

Hearken now, thou sweetest bird;
May they hope, then let be heard:
Thy cuckoo, thy cuckoo,
More and more cuckoo, cuckoo.

Hear'st thou! an enamoured pair
Gladly at the altar were;
And they with their budding youth,
Virtue have and loyal truth.
Tell how long that we must wait,
Ere we may together mate!
Hark! cuckoo! hark! cuckoo!
All is still! 'twas only two!

And 'tis not our fault, we're sure,
That there are these two years more!
When at last are wedded we,
Will there pa-pa-papas be?
Know that we shall much rejoice,
If we often hear thy voice.
Once! cuckoo! twice! cuckoo!
Still! cuckoo! cuckoo! cuckoo!

If we have not greatly erred,
Half a dozen near we heard.
If thee civil words we give,
Wilt thou say, how long we'll live?
Frankly we confess to thee,
Many a day we'd like to see.
Cuckoo! cuckoo! cuckoo!
Cu, cuckoo! cuckoo! cuckoo!

Life is like a festal day,
When 'tis long upon its way.
Live we then together both,
Shall we keep the early troth?
Were that troth to ever cease,
All would fail to give us peace.
Cuckoo! cuckoo! cuckoo!
Cu, cuckoo! cuckoo! cuckoo!
In infinitum.

COPTIC SONG.*

Let ye the learned dispute and fight on,
Teachers austere and discreet too may be!
All of the wisest in times that are gone
Nod to each other, and smile, and agree:
Foolish to wait for the improvement of fools!
Children of wisdom, to treat as your tools
Fools, as is fitting, be all of accord!

Merlin the old, in his luminous grave,
Where in my youth spoken with him I have,

* The celebrated necklace trial afforded Goethe the materials for an opera, to which he gave the title, *Der Gross Cophta*, one of the names and characters assumed by Cagliostro. As intended to be brought upon the stage, several songs were introduced, which do not appear in the piece as published in his works, where it is called a comedy. Among them were this piece and the one following.

Taught me in answer a similar word:
Foolish to wait for the improvement of fools!
Children of wisdom, to treat as your tools
Fools, as is fitting, be all of accord!

And on the lofty far Indian heights,
Deep too 'mid Egypt's mysterious rites,
Only that sacred reply I have heard:
Foolish to wait for the improvement of fools!
Children of wisdom, to treat as your tools
Fools, as is fitting, be all of accord!

ANOTHER.

Go! thy master's beck obey,
Profit of thy early days,
Wisdom learn without delay:
On the scales of Fortune stays
Seldom e'er the tongue at rest;
Rise thou must, or be depressed,
Rule and gain must be for thee,
Or must learn to serve and lose,
Triumph must or suffering choose,
Hammer must or anvil be.

GELLERT'S MONUMENT

BY OESER.

When Gellert, the beloved, slept,
In quiet many a bosom wept,
And many a dull and rugged strain
United with the purest pain;
And every bungler at the grave,
A flow'ret for the laurel crown,
A mite towards the bard's renown,
With satisfied demeanor gave:
Stood Oeser from the throng aside,
And feeling all our loss, conceived
A lasting form, a lovely guide
To him, of whom we were bereaved;
And gathered, ere the thought had flown,
The stammering praises in the stone,
As we the ashes we respect
Do in a narrow urn collect.

CALM AT SEA.

Ocean rules a calm profound,
Motionless the waters rest,
And the seaman all around
Sees the glassy plain, distressed.
Nowhere blows of air a breath!
What a fearful calm of death!
O'er the vast and placid plain
Seeks the eye a wave in vain.

ANACREON'S GRAVE.*

Here where blooms the rose, where vine to laurel clings,
Where the turtle woos, and where the cricket sings,
What sweet grave is here, that planted round and dressed
Have the gods with life? It is Anacreon's rest.
Summer, spring, and autumn happy lived the bard;
Now the hillock is from wintry winds his guard.

* An imitation from the Greek Anthology. See Bohn's English versions, page 126.

THE BROTHERS.

Two brothers, Sleep and Slumber, called the gods to
attend,
Prometheus prayed upon his children to descend;
But, light to gods, too heavy for a mortal frame,
Their Slumber turned to sleep, and death their Sleep
became.

WARNING.

Awake not Love! The lovely child is sleeping yet;
Thy task go finish, which the day for thee hath set!
The prudent mother use of precious moments makes,
While slumbers yet her boy, for all too soon he wakes.

EPIGRAMS.

AN ORIGINAL.

A QUIDAM says: "I'm not of any school;
The master liveth not who is my rule;
And I the idea also spurn,
That from the dead I aught should learn."
Which means, if right I understand his rule:
"I am upon my own account a fool."

SOCIETY.

A QUIET scholar, who the day had spent
In high society, and homeward went,
When he was asked: Had he been gratified?
"I would not read them, were they books," replied.

EXAMPLE.

If sometimes I my patience lose,
Upon the patient Earth I muse,
Which day by day, and year by year,
Is whirling in the same career.
What claim have I to better fate?—
My dear mamma I'll imitate.

TO THE OBTRUSIVE.

They should part, who together can't be brought!
To pasture where you like, I hinder not:
For I of old was born, and lately ye.
Do what ye will, so ye but let me be!

RECIPROCITY.

Buttoned pocket, understand!
Thee shall no one e'er relieve:
Hand is only washed by hand;
Wilt thou take, then thou must give!

BROAD AS LONG.

He who is modest, must endure,
And suffer he, who hath no shame;
But whether shameless or demure,
Incur thou wilt an equal blame.

MEMENTO.

Fate thou may'st perchance withstand,
Though it often gives a blow;
If it should the way demand,
Then thou from the way must go!

ANOTHER.

Thou must not thy fate withstand,
Neither from it shouldst thou flee!
Meet it with a friendly hand,
Friendly on 'twill carry thee.

RULE OF LIFE.

If thou a pleasant life wilt lead,
The sorrows past thou must not heed,
The smallest thing must thee annoy;
The present always must enjoy,
And chiefly not a soul must hate,
And leave to God the future's fate.

BEHAVIOR.

The freaks of weather ne'er allow,
Or lords, to overcast thy brow;
And thou at pretty women's fancies
Must show no discontented glances.

THE BEST.

What better wilt thou have, my friend,
If heart and head are worried!
Who makes of love and wrong an end,
'Tis time that he were buried.

HUMILITY.

When I the masters' works look on,
Then see I that which they have done;
When to my trifles then I turn,
That which I should have done, I learn.

NONE OF ALL.

If of yourself a slave you make,
Not one on you will pity take;
Make for yourself a lordly lot,
And still the people like it not;
And if, in fine, the same you stay,
There's nothing in you, they will say.

STIPULATION.*

You still keep on, and will not cease
To ask advice, which I can give;
But then, that I may be at peace,
Pray promise, not by it to live.

* Goethe said: When one has looked about the world awhile, and sees how the wisest projects miscarry, and the absurdest often succeed, he is no longer willing to give advice. If one asks me for advice, I say that I am ready to give it, with the condition, that he promises not to follow it. Eckermann, 1831.

REVERSED.

Are they in sorrow, whom we love,
That truly grieves all things above;
That they be happy whom we hate,
We cannot bear to contemplate;
Reversed, we wish for nought beside,
Both love and malice gratified.

EQUALITY.

The greatest is beyond our reach,
  Our equals only, envy we;
  The basest man on earth is he,
Who, as his equal, looks on each.

IDEAL.

On godlike forms the painter dares,
He hath his noblest work displayed;
But that, of which he so despairs:
The loved one to her friend portrayed,
That let him try! A dream will do,
A phantom will be welcome too.

PARDONABLE.

Still late and early comes to me
The sweetest face, in thought;
I think on her, on me thinks she,
And both can help it not.

If fails to you a generous heart in aught,
Then do as though the wrong you counted not;
He'll credit in his ledger give,
Nor will he long your debtor live.

Let hate and envy waste away,
The course of good they ne'er shall stay.
For God be thanked! it is an ancient form:
Wherever shines the sun, 'tis also warm.

If ever thou hast justly done perchance,
And on it squints a foe with evil glance;
The very thing he soon or late,
He knows not how, will perpetrate.

ADMONITION.

Wilt thou ever further stray,
Whilst thy blessing lies so near?
Learn on it thy hand to lay,
For thy good is ever there.

CONTRADICTION.

Perplex me not, gainsaying every word!
A man no sooner speaks, than he has erred.

EXCUSE.

Why will you blame the inconstant woman's freaks?
Condemn her not. A constant man she seeks.

FROM THE *ZAHME XENIEN.*

Whatever, friend, of truth or fable
In thousand books may meet your sight;
It all is but a tower of Babel,
If love the whole do not unite.

"You in immortal life believe;
Pray, tell us what you know about it."
The greatest reason I can give,
Is that we cannot do without it.

I love to hear the young ones prattle,
The new rings clear, but the old times rattle.

Much easier 'tis a wreath to bind,
Than worthy head for it to find.

A simple yes, or simple no,
If prompt, for much with me will go.

Than this could greater grief be known?
To be in Paradise alone.

If nought thou hast, thou bear'st an easy weight,
But riches are for all an easier freight.

If thou wouldst nothing useless buy,
Rest not on idle wares your eye.

My friend, what has the poor glass done you? Say,
Make not such ugly faces at it pray.

Among the mighty deeds is that,
To fry oneself in his own fat.

To live with me, have you a mind,
Then you must leave your brute behind.

FROM THE *XENIEN.**

From aristocrats in rags, ye Gods, remove me far,
And so from democrats with epaulet and star.

The aristocrats may pass, for courteous is their pride;
But ye, canaille, are arrogant and coarse beside.

At beggars aristocratic spaniels bark. A whelp
Of democratic breed at silken hose will yelp.

* A title borrowed from a book of epigrams of Martial; but there is nothing in common between the old Xenia and the new. Martial's are "peptic precepts." These are intended to be caustic, although, for the most part, they are weak enough. They originated in a "vigilance committee" established by Goethe and Schiller over the German world of letters, which, as is usual with such powers, speedily degenerated into an instrument of private literary vengeance.

Faust oft hath to the devil sold himself of yore;
But never so prosaic the bargain struck before.*

Oh! may thy thread of life spin on, as spins in prose
Thy period, o'er which Lachesis seems, alas, to doze.†

Friend, once for all, wilt thou eternal life procure me,
Still in the present, I beseech you, do not bore me.‡

What 'tis ye seek in Heaven, my friends, I know it well:
Ye only seek protection from the flames of Hell.

* A sneer at Schink's *Faust*. Boas—*Xenienkampf*.

† An attack on Wieland's style. *Ibid*.

‡ Supposed to be levelled at Fred. Schlegel or Fred. Stollberg. *Ibid*.

Ye scorn the blind empiric all, when ye are blest;
But when in need, he is the Delphic God confessed.

THE EMPIRIC.

To say that ye take not the surest path, were wrong;
But on the smoothest path ye blindly grope along.

Not always Error harms; but e'er 'twill hurtful be
To err. How much, we at the journey's ending see.

He is my friend, who working with me, goes the way;
But should he bid me rest, at once farewell I'll say.

To us are others' children ne'er as ours so dear;
And Error, our own child, lies to our heart so near!

Such manuscripts as mine, nor scholar hath nor king,
My love, she writes for me what songs for her I sing.

An epigram too short t' express a tender thought!
But tell me, love, if shorter still a kiss is not?

What is the Holy? That which joins together minds,
Though slight the bond, e'en as the rush the chaplet binds.

What is the Holiest? That which deep and deeper felt,
Makes spirits into one now and forever melt.

THE CHINESE IN ROME.*

I saw a Chinaman in Rome; the fabrics there
Of old and modern days to him all cumbrous were.
"Poor things!" he sighed, "would God that they could
comprehend
That roofs on wooden columns always should depend;
That only carvings, lattice-work, and gilded board
Can pleasure to the cultivated eye afford."
He was the type of many a dreamer, who compares
With Nature's everlasting woof his flimsy wares;
Who calls the truly healthful all diseased, and can
Find in himself, the sick, alone the healthful man.

* The Chinese is no less a person than Jean Paul Friederich Richter. Schiller had spoken of Goethe as "the German Propertius," and Jean Paul, referring to this, wrote to Knebel, "that in such stormy times there was more need of a Tyrtæus, than of a Propertius." Goethe stung by the sarcasm, repaid it in these lines. Boas—*Xenienkampf.*

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